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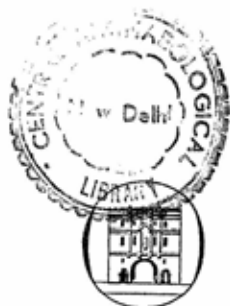*Essays in the Nature and Growth*
of a Cultural Tradition

ISLAM

Essays in the Nature and Growth

of a Cultural Tradition

BY

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For
GISELLE

FOREWORD

THE STUDY of civilizations is a field unevenly divided between humanists and social scientists. The former tend to look to the past of a civilization, usually to its "classic period," the latter look to its present. The humanists "interview" texts, monuments, and paintings; the social scientists interview people. The humanists see the civilization through the works of its most reflective and creative minds, the social scientists characteristically attend to what is done and thought by the many plain people. Because of the departmentalization of the disciplines the civilization we study becomes departmentalized, and the continuities between past and present, text and context, philosopher and peasant, are lost. In this state of academic affairs, the perfected achievements recorded in the great works of the thinker and of the artist bear no discernible relation to the problems and strivings of the present. As long as the humanist refuses to take the present seriously and ignores the life of the little people of the villages, and as long as the social scientist disdains "library research" and fails to connect his work with the study of the developments of the common life in high art and in the educated thinker's deliberate cultivation and improvement of values, the picture of a civilization which either draws must remain incomplete.

To the separation of humanist and social scientist there are notable exceptions. Anthropology is more hospitable to the work of other kinds of students than are some other sciences. In A. L. Kroeber anthropology has an accomplished social scientist whose work has moved to meet the humanist. Professor Kroeber has written much about civilizations, and often in a way to unite the interests of humanist and social scientist. He has written about the temporal patterns of growth or decline of arts and sciences in the civilization, and on such special subjects as "The Ancient Oikoumene as a Historic Culture Aggregate" and "The Novel in Asia and Europe." The belief which he expresses that "cultural anthropology will ultimately receive heavy reinforcement from the humanities themselves for transformation into the kind of science it is to be"* is the reason why the present series of publications appears under anthropological auspices.

In this collection of essays by Professor von Grunebaum we observe an accomplished humanist moving to meet the social scientist. This he does not by abandoning the materials and techniques of the humanist or by dealing primarily with contemporary events in the Islamic world. It is rather his conception of the scope and methods of cultural research and his choice of problems that bring him close to the social scientist and particularly to the cultural anthropologist. His essays deal with three fundamental problems in Islamic civilization: the growth among Muslims of a consciousness of belonging to a culture; the unity of Muslim civilization as expressed in literature, political thought, attitude to science, and urban structure; and the interaction of Islam with other civilizations. These are problems which must be dealt with in the study of any civilization, and, when properly dealt with, they compel us to consider a civilization as a whole and as a culturally continuous process from past to present.

Islam offers particularly striking materials for the understanding of the general nature of civilizations, since, as Mr. von Grunebaum points out in his introductory article, it developed from a tribal culture into a world civilization in a very brief period within relatively recent times, it possesses a highly articulated coherence, and it has in the course of its development been involved in encounters with many other civilizations. For these reasons Mr. von Grunebaum's essays give us something of a model for the analysis of a civilization as a whole.

The quick growth of Muslim cultural consciousness from the mentality of desert nomads to that of urban merchants, and from a narrowly defined kin, racial, and territorial basis to a universal religious and cultural basis poses a problem to the cultural historian. How is it to be explained? Mr. von Grunebaum suggests that this growth is best understood as a response to the "formative problems" the Arabs encountered in building a political-religious empire. Many needs—for urban centers, for administrative techniques, for ways of dealing with the cultural nationalism of conquered groups like the Persians, for stamping out dissent and schism—all contributed to the building up of a sense of belonging to a civilization, and to the elimination of all but religious criteria for membership.

It is true that the nuclear Arabic group and culture remains dominant in this wider growth, but it is a dominance that is based on the claim by the Arabs to be the custodians of the pure "core

culture" of the civilization—the sacred book, the sacred language, the holy city, the true message of the prophet. The cultivation of this claim and thus the intensification of consciousness of a distinct way of life grows with a decline in Arab political fortunes. In this manner what begins as a national religion soon becomes a supernational religion and community with a distinctive negative attitude toward the state and political officials.

Mr. von Grunebaum's delineation of the "spirit" of Islam in its characteristic expressions in Muslim literature, attitudes to politics and science, and in the Muslim town, clears up some apparently contradictory and paradoxical features of Muslim civilization. For despite the high value this civilization puts on poetry, learning, the political community and the town, it has not developed imaginative literature, scientific knowledge, political and urban institutions to the level known in the West. Mr. von Grunebaum explains this "backwardness" by reference to the dominant world view of Muslim theology. In that world view every constituent of civilization derives its value from its capacity to satisfy the Muslim's requirements for the good life; it has no autonomous value. In themselves, political states, urban communities, literary and scientific activities are external and relatively unimportant "accidents"; they become important and characteristically Muslim only as they help the faithful to serve Allah.

Such organic and hierarchically organized cultures have been described for some primitive societies in terms of dominant "configurations," "culture patterns," "themes," and other concepts. But for Islam, it is much easier to relate the different parts of its culture to a supervening pattern because it has an articulate and definite orthodoxy embodied in a sacred book and officially interpreted by a learned class of specialists, the *ʿulamâ*. In this sense total culture patterns are more readily established for some complex cultures—the sacred book civilizations—than they can be for the simpler primitive cultures where they remain implicit and "unconscious canons of choice."

This difference, however, is only relative. The Koran is devoutly worshiped even by the illiterate believer, but it is not a complete and unequivocal authority. The traditions—the *sunna*, and the consensus of the learned, the *ijmâ*—must frequently be invoked as auxiliary authorities. And orthodoxy itself gets challenged and changed by schism and sect and by the inconspicuous pressures of changing conditions and changing needs. It is especially interesting

to see how an apparently closed system of thought accommodates itself to these changes through gradual absorption of heterodox positions, through attempts to separate native Muslim sciences and "foreign" sciences, and through the separation of the sacred scribes —the *fuqahâ* and *'ulamâ*—from the secular scribes—the *kuttâb*. While some of these devices for change operate at a barely perceptible level, the chief difference perhaps from the change of total patterns in primitive cultures is the highly self-conscious discussion that accompanies change in Islam—as in other civilizations.

In the last group of essays in the volume, Mr. von Grunebaum discusses a type of cultural change which has been essential for Islam and has become increasingly crucial not only for it but for practically all contemporary civilizations. This is the cultural change that results from encounters with other civilizations. Because of the strong culture consciousness in Islam, the attitude to this kind of change is not always realistic. Despite its borrowings from Jewish and Christian theology, Greek philosophy, Persian administration and literature, Indian mathematics and astronomy, "Islam," as Mr. von Grunebaum observes, "has always combined a capacity for absorption of foreign elements with a certain reluctance to admit their foreign origin."

But Islam is not unique in this respect; every culture and civilization achieves its distinctive cultural integration through this kind of domestication of foreign elements. And Firdausî's use of ancient Persian epics to absorb the new faith is one striking example of how even nationalistic history can serve the process. In view of these considerations, it may be puzzling why Islam's recent encounters with the West should arouse the sense of cultural clash that the essay on "attempts at self-interpretation" documents. One reason is that Mr. von Grunebaum is describing the view of professional intellectuals who feel a personal responsibility for solving the problems of "Islam and the West." Perhaps more important than this are the special circumstances which Mr. von Grunebaum thinks distinguish the present encounter from those in the past— the relatively weak political position of Muslim countries; the resurgence of nationalism, and with it, the desire to renew the traditional religion under political safeguards; the differences in attitudes toward progress, authority, science, individualism, between Islam and the West, etc. These circumstances do not, as Mr. von Grunebaum points out, foredoom Islam's successful absorption of elements of Western culture, but they do create a special situation

in which the choice appears to be more of a dilemma between incompatible alternatives than it actually is.

This is the second of three volumes in which, under the leadership of Professor von Grunebaum, the Islamist moves closer to the problems characteristic of cultural anthropology. In a third, soon to be published in this series under the title *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*, a group of Islamists will describe and explain the interactions of Mohammedan doctrine and institution with the local cultures over which Islam came to prevail.

ROBERT REDFIELD
MILTON SINGER

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
January 15, 1955
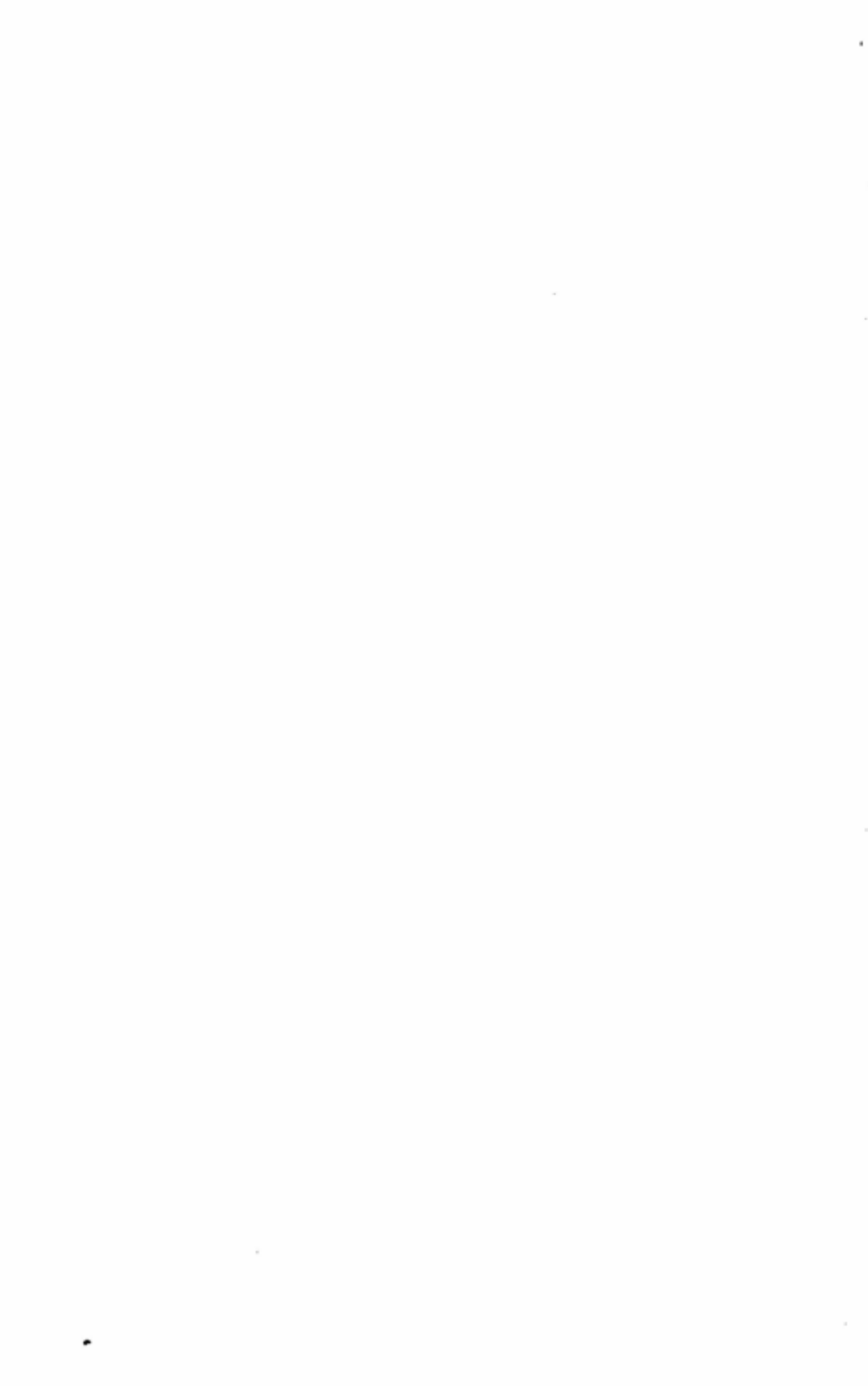
PREFACE

THE PAPERS united in the present volume have their origin for the most part in a sustained interest in the development, past and present, of the cultural identity of the Islamic world. In a sense they may be considered as prolegomena to a larger study on the rise of a Muslim culture consciousness with which I have been preoccupied for some time. The organization by Professors Robert Redfield and Milton Singer of a seminar on "Islam and the West" in Spring, 1953, provided the occasion to formulate some of the conclusions which I had reached and which in the intervening year I have been rethinking and revising.

The following articles contained in this volume have been published previously and appear here by permission of the publishers:

In being republished, all these papers have undergone certain changes, especially Nos. V and X, to which material has been added, and No. XI, which has been abridged and in large measure reorganized.

<div align="right">G. E. VON GRUNEBAUM</div>

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
    August 1, 1954

For the second printing additional material has been incorporated in the Appendix.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
    December, 1959

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

I

THE PROFILE OF MUSLIM CIVILIZATION

To CULTURAL RESEARCH intended to deepen the self-understanding of Western civilization the consideration of Islam commends itself on these grounds:

1. Islam presents the spectacle of the development of a world religion in the full light of history.

2. It presents the further spectacle of the widening of this religion into a civilization.

3. In the development of this Islamic civilization foreign cultural traditions were absorbed, modified, and again eliminated. Some of these traditions have also gone into the making of the West. Thus the growth and decline of Islamic civilization between the seventh and the twelfth centuries A.D. illuminate almost dramatically the processes of cultural interaction and culture transformation, as well as the concept of cultural influence as such.

4. Islamic civilization constitutes a complete system of thought and behavior growing out of a fundamental impulse and enveloping man in all his relations—to God, the universe, and himself. This system is both close enough to the Western view of the world to be intellectually and emotionally understandable and sufficiently far removed from it to deepen, by contrast, the self-interpretation of the West.

I

Like Christianity and Manichaeanism, Islam is a revealed religion in which the person of the revealing agent forms an integral part of the faith. It is not sufficient to believe in the message brought the Arabs by Muḥammad, the son of ʿAbdallâh, of Mecca (*ca.* A.D. 570–June 8, 632); it is also imperative to believe in the significance of the election, by the Lord, of Muḥammad and none other as the Seal of the Prophets. The creed links the two fundamental verities: "I testify that there is no god but God (Allâh) and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God."

To himself, Muḥammad is a mere man; there is no claim to consubstantiality, in whatever guise, with the divinity; he is no thau-

maturge, although he is frequently pressured to perform miracles in substantiation of his mission. His one and only miracle is the Book, as it has been in one form or another the evidentiary and intellectual center of any respectable faith since the last centuries B.C.; and this miracle is his, only in so far as it is given to and through him. Whenever he is not guided by direct revelation, he is fallible in thought and deed. He does not consider himself the exemplar on which the faithful are to model their lives, although, as time went by, his came to be considered the ideal life and his personality the quintessence of perfection, human and superhuman; and, in yielding to the changing dreams of the ages, he was understood as the great ascetic, the intercessor with God for the believers, the mystic saint, the miracle-worker with knowledge of the hidden, the descendant of Adam and heir of his spark of divine substance, the cause of creation, the hub of the universe.

God's message is universal but is conveyed to different peoples by different messengers and at different times. Each messenger is sent to his own people with a partial version in his own tongue of the Book's heavenly prototype. There have been many such messengers in the past—tradition knows of 124,000—but with Muhammad, who was vouchsafed the final and most perfect message, the end of Revelation has been reached. It is the very identity of his message with that of his predecessors, like Moses and Jesus, that vouches for Muhammad's veracity. When, to his profound dismay, the Jews and Christians failed to recognize their scriptures in his teachings, Muhammad realized that they had falsified their original Revelation and that God had sent him to restore the unadulterated religion of Abraham, the father of Ishmael, the ancestor of the Arabs. Before Muhammad, Marcion and Mani had already developed the notion that the disciples inevitably corrupt the doctrine of the master; and Mani, at least, had taken great care to prevent this from happening to his ideas. Muhammad was successful to the extent that the text of his Book has come down to us undistorted.[1]

It would seem that Arab paganism, never systematized or given a philosophic skeleton, had been losing its grip during the sixth century A.D. It had been a faith of great local variations, with astral coloring among the more civilized groups, but everywhere still close to primitive fetishistic forms of worship. Mecca, a commercial community that had grown up around the sanctuary of the Ka'ba and a cosmopolitan town, harbored a sizable foreign popu-

[1] See note (i) of appendix.

lation, many of them Jews and Christians of a sort; and there is evidence of a feeling of religious dissatisfaction and of a seeking for something new, something purer and intellectually more substantial than the inherited and but lukewarmly held polytheism. The age had begun to be concerned with the Hereafter. It was the fear of the End, the trembling before the Judgment to which Muḥammad gave expression in his first inspired utterances. By turning away from the idols that are but wood or stone and accepting the truth of the one and only God, the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth, man could win rescue from the horrors of the Day and the eternal punishment that was to be meted out soon; for it was rescue rather than salvation that the age craved and that Muḥammad offered. People found themselves frightened and conscious of their evil deeds. The Fire was threatening them, and they yearned for protection. But they did not feel sinful to the core, corrupt in their essence, laboring under the metaphysical consequences of a Fall. No original sin had to be expunged. They were not in need of salvation through divine self-sacrifice, they needed information as to the true God and as to the behavior that he demanded. Islam has never developed sacramental mysteries; it has remained faithful to the impulse of its origin by showing erring man the path to paradise in a purely rational, almost technical, manner. But man, rewarded or punished, remains man—God does not descend to earth to lift man beyond himself. In fact, as apologetic and polemic literature amply testifies, to this very day the concept of the suffering God as well as the complementary concepts of original sin and salvation from sin have remained alien to Islam to the point of being intellectually incomprehensible, owing to the utter foreignness of the *Lebensgefühl* that evoked the longings and the doctrines to satisfy them.

The immediate means of attaining this rescue and of meeting the emergency of the impending catastrophe was the acceptance of monotheism under the guidance of the Lord's authorized Messenger. It is not easy to gauge when Muḥammad abandoned his terrifying vision of the End of the World as close by; but, as time wore on, his anxiety was somewhat calmed by a realization of the indefinite postponement of the hour. What it took the early Christians decades to accept, Muhammad acknowledged after a very few years—as the Lord was pleased to continue this world for a further reprieve, short or long, his community had to be settled in it in complete conformance with his revealed instructions. So it became

the task of the community to evolve a comprehensive pattern for a life under God, covering every phase of human existence from conception to burial and eliminating any distinction between the sacred and the profane aspects of life by making every instant of it religiously relevant and requiring ritualistic perfection for the performance of any action whatsoever. In this manner behavior was stereotyped to a point, but the whole of life, down to its most repulsive detail, was given the supreme dignity of religious significance. And not only was the life of the individual to be transformed into a sequence of divinely required acts, but Muslim society as a whole was to be equally transformed: the state, the army, the treasury became in the terminology of the early believers the state of God, the army of God, the treasury of God.

It is the quest for the correct life that stands out as the supreme motive of the Islamic experiment; it is the conflict between this life and the exigencies of this world (frequently personified to the pious as lawless rulers, hypocrites, and heretics) that largely dominates the internal history of Islam. The increasingly narrow and worried interpretation of the ideal that had early become, in its elaboration and administration, the vested interest of a class of jurist-theologians would seem to bear most of the guilt of the corroding discord between fiction and reality that, in the later Middle Ages, pervades Muslim society more profoundly than it does, of necessity, any human organization.

The relatively minor role of doctrine as contrasted with behavior is reflected in the five "pillars" of Islam, the fundamental obligations imposed on each and every believer. The Prophet is supposed to have said: "Islam is built upon five things, testimony that there is no god but God and that Muḥammad is the Messenger of God; prayer; the poor-rate; pilgrimage [to Mecca]; and fast in Ramaḍân."[1]

Correctness as the basic purpose of life makes for authoritarianism. Duties and doctrine can be accepted as binding only when imposed by, or derived from, a source that is beyond human questioning. Directly or indirectly any regulation should go back to the Lord himself. The Koran (*Qurʾân*, from Syriac *qeryânâ, lectio* and lectionary) as the collection of all preserved revelations—undertaken under the caliph ʿUthmân (644–56)—in other words, the direct speech of the Lord addressed to Muḥammad, is marked out as the foremost authority. To the Muslim, the Koran treats of every subject, but more specifically of matters of faith, legal prescrip-

tions, and prophetic history. The first Arabic book, composed in frequently relaxed rhymed prose and put together from records of the individual revelations in a somewhat arbitrary manner, the Koran contains, especially in its eschatological *sûras* or sections, many a beautiful passage. In mastering the difficulties of expressing trains of thought not hitherto articulated in Arabic, Muḥammad shows himself a literary innovator of considerable stature. A certain clumsiness, say, in legal formulations,[2] is as palpable as is the defective technique of narration when it comes to telling complex stories of former prophets and the like, particularly when the koranic style is compared with the matchless grace and precision with which later Arabic authors present narrative material. To the Muslim, however, the Koran as the Word of God is inimitable in point of diction, and the desire to explain its stylistic uniqueness has been one powerful impulse toward the development of an Arabic theory of literature. Muslims are agreed that the Koran requires philological explanation; they are not agreed on the extent to which exegesis is admissible. But as faith necessitates the harmonization of the personal or the school viewpoint with Revelation, philosophical, mystical, and any kind of partisan exegesis, best served by allegorical interpretation, is unavoidable.

But, even upon acceptance of a generous measure of interpretative elasticity, the Koran will not resolve every problem of the religious life. It is necessary to fall back on the *sunna*, the prophetic custom or tradition, as a second authority. In the absence of a koranic line, a private saying of the Prophet or a contemporary report on his behavior in a given situation will be decisive. The more in the consciousness of the community the Messenger was transformed into a thaumaturge, the more easily could political prophecies *ex eventu*, school doctrines, and, in general, sayings reflecting the state of mind of the times be ascribed to him. To the community, the *sunna* acquired an importance that allowed it to override on occasion the express statement of the Book itself. This willingness to accept reality under a relatively thin disguise of prophetic endorsement is more clearly evidenced in the recognition of the consensus of the community as a third authority after Koran and *sunna*. Methodologically justified by the alleged words of Muḥammad, "My community will never be agreed on an error," the *ijmâ'* of the learned that does not make decisions of a programmatic character but only states what has become common (and therewith binding) practice and belief has permitted the integration into

Islam of essentially "anti-Islamic" elements, such as the cult of saints, and thereby prevented too dangerous a chasm between the traditional norm and the practice of the day.

Nevertheless, Islam has always been traditionalist. The examples to be followed belong to the ever more remote past. Muḥammad's early followers were the best generation; their successors, the second best. From then on, the world has been deteriorating and will continue to deteriorate until it comes to its appointed end. The living generation is not permitted to change the inherited ways—for change must needs be for the worse. Innovation in religious matters (and religion covers everything relevant to the good life) is to be rejected, the innovator liable to punishment. The reformer therefore either adduces prophetic or koranic witness for his proposal or advocates the return to the golden age of primitive Islam. The pattern may not be abandoned or even modified; it may only be stripped of accretions and freed of distortions that have accumulated in course of time. The heroic, the creative, age is past. This is true outside the religious sphere, too. The critics fight hard, if unsuccessfully, to contain poetry within the limits of the pre-Islamic tradition and prevent it from adapting to changed conditions and changed emotions. Only in the ninth and tenth centuries is there a feeling of youthfulness in the intellectual world, a feeling that the ancients can be equaled and surpassed. Fatimid propaganda in Africa stresses the youth of the dynasty as opposed to the decrepit regime of the Abbasid house in Baghdâd. But this self-confidence is far from being shared by all, and it wanes in the eleventh century without having affected the general attitude of looking backward for the guiding ideals.

The authority of tradition is best upheld by a formalistic approach which gives promise of eliminating the wilfulness of personal reasoning. When the community found itself flooded with an immense and steadily growing number of forged sayings of Muhammad, criteria for sifting the genuine from the spurious had to be found. Instead of concentrating on an analysis of the content, the collectors studied the chain of witnesses that linked the latest reporter of the apophthegm to the Prophet himself.[3] These inquiries laid the ground for impressive biographical studies that remained unparalleled in the West until comparatively recent times, but they failed to provide an obstacle to the learned forger nor did they, to the modern mind, establish the material trustworthiness of the sayings.

Prayer as included among the five "pillars" is ritual prayer, not personal invocation or communion with God. It consists of a fairly complicated sequence of formulas that are recited in co-ordination with a sequence of exactly prescribed body-movements. Ablution and the covering of (parts of) the body are two necessary preliminaries. The prayers are to be performed five times a day at stated times, preferably in common, in the mosque and behind a prayer leader. Immense attention has been given by the canon lawyers to the detail of the performance and to any accidental circumstance that might invalidate it. Ghazzâlî (d. 1111), perhaps the greatest theologian of Islam, has to combat their view that it is the outward acts and utterances rather than the inner attitude that determine the validity of the prayer. He defines the limitations of the Law:

[Canon Lawyers] build up the external side of the laws of the religion upon the external side of the acts of the members, since the external side of the acts is a sufficient guard against being killed or chastised by the sultan. As to whether the external side of these acts benefits in the next abode, this is not within the bounds of canon law, because it is not possible to claim agreement on this point.⁴

Islam is permeated by a sense of the autocracy of the Lord. The Lord is One, All-Powerful, not bound by the moral law, in no way obliged to give man right guidance or to reward and punish him according to his obedience or disobedience. The greatness of Allâh is emphasized through the helpless weakness of man, His most illustrious creature. It seems rather obvious that the real reason for the Muslim denial of laws of nature, of an eternal order of things by which God binds himself to abide, is due not so much to dialectical considerations as to the overpowering impulse to revel in the contemplation of Allâh's unrestrained majesty, even though it is at the cost of man's self-abasement and the injection of an element of whimsicality in the government of the universe. The apparent causal regularity of events reflects not irrevocable law but the Lord's habitual procedure. Like the benevolent despot on earth whose absurdly magnified reflection He is, the Lord is, on the whole, kindly inclined toward His creatures and disposed to lighten the burden of their obligations, to take a lenient view of their efforts, and to be approachable by His favorites, especially the Prophet Muḥammad, when they intercede for the erring believer. Orthodox Islam is imbued with the realization, shared by (if not inherited from) the Gnostic world and later on by Calvin and Pascal, that an act of awakening, transforming grace will always have to precede man's own effort to draw near God. With merciless precision the Koran

declares: "We have created for Gehenna [Hell] many of the jinn
and of mankind" (Koran 7:178). And again: "Whomsoever He
willeth, Allâh sendeth astray, and whomsoever He willeth He set-
teth on a straight path."

The Mu'tazila, the founders of speculative dogmatics in Islam—
the school arises in the eighth century—fought the anthropomor-
phism of the orthodox concept of God and argued for the strictest
possible interpretation of Allâh's unity. But, in teaching that God
will always do what is best and wisest for His creation, they limit
His arbitrary omnipotence. By co-ordinating human behavior and
the divine reaction on a more conventional moral level, they are
clearly animated by a different outlook on man, whose dignity they
are asserting and protecting by their emphasis on the Lord's jus-
tice. Orthodoxy has never ceased to represent the opposite atti-
tude.

Personal piety in the first generations of believers remained dom-
inated by fear. The greatest religious genius of the period, Ḥasan
al-Baṣrî (d. 728), was first and foremost an ascetic of harsh auster-
ity. "The main theme of his teaching and preaching was a call to
repentance because of the wrath that was to come, and he urged
his hearers to despise this transitory life and all that belonged to
this world which perishes. . . . We are told that when Ḥasan heard
of a man who would be saved in the end, after a thousand years in
Hell, he fell to weeping and said, 'Would that I might be like that
man'."[6] The formalism of man's relations to God as laid down in
the Canon Law and what appeared to many the transformation of
religion into jurisprudence directed pious sentiment toward the
seeking of an immediate contact with the Lord. Fear and reverence
were to be balanced by love and trust. By complete and exclusive
devotion, the believer could enter into his Lord's familiarity, be
vouchsafed the divine vision, and submerge his own self in ecstasy
in the divine essence. Mystic experience bridged the abyss, consid-
ered impassable by the theologian, between man and God, leading
in some instances to full pantheistic self-identification of the serv-
ant with the Master. Most rationalizing effort of the mystics was
concerned with showing the compatibility of their experience with
the orthodox norm, the possibility of reconciling the exclusiveness
of the prophetic mission with the personal contact between the
mystic adept and his God. Before the latent opposition between
the mystic and the official approach had come to a head—in fact,
before the theological implications of their mystic approach had

completely dawned on its professors—the great woman-saint, Râbi'a al-'Adawiyya (d. *ca.* 801), spoke to God in inspired unconcern:

I have loved Thee with two loves, a selfish love and a love that is worthy (of Thee),

As for the love which is selfish, I occupy myself therein with remembrance of Thee to the exclusion of all others,

As for that which is worthy of Thee, therein Thou raisest the veil that I may see Thee.

O my Hope and my Rest and my Delight,

The heart can love none other but Thee.[7]

Abû Naṣr as-Sarrâj (d. 988) explains that the Ṣûfîs (literally, "those clad in wool," *ṣûf*)

agree with the Traditionists and Jurists in their beliefs and accept their sciences and consult them in difficult matters of religious law. Should there be a difference of opinion, the Ṣûfîs always adopt the principle of following the strictest and most perfect course; they venerate the commandments of God and do not seek to evade them. Such is their practice in regard to the formal sciences handled by the Traditionists and Jurists, but having left these behind they rise to heights of mystical devotion and ethical self-culture which are exclusively their own.[8]

The jurists discuss the Koran and Tradition, but only the Ṣûfîs realize the feelings referred to by terms such as "repentance," "patience," "fear," and "hope." All Ṣûfism is to be found in the Koran and in the *sunna*, but only the Ṣûfîs have experiential access to these aspects of Revelation.[9] Even had not many a mystic drawn the logical conclusion of his position and deprecated the externals of religion and the keeping of the canonical obligations, the contradictory aspirations pursued by the jurists and the mystics would have carried the threat of the disintegration of the very basis of Islam. To the jurist-theologian the mystic's indifference to doctrine appeared both impious and antisocial, while to the mystic the rationalization of the ineffable with its scholastic niceties seemed insignificant. Jalâl ad-Dîn Rûmî (d. 1273) said:

This doctrine has become the adversary and bitter enemy of that, so that the imitator (who adopts the belief of others) is in a dilemma.

The only muzzle of evil suggestions (of doubt) is Love. . . .

O (dear) soul, Love alone cuts disputation short, for it (alone) comes to the rescue when you cry for help against arguments.[10]

Islam lays claim to the totality of the believer's life and thought. The community as the true repository of the living faith—there is

no church organization that stands apart from the body of the lay faithful—is compelled to decide its political problems on religious grounds. The early sects doubtless owe their origin to deep-seated differences of outlook, religious and social, but they crystallized into communities within the general body of the Muslims under the impact of concrete political situations. The egalitarian and rigoristic Ḥârijites were drawn together by their dissent from the majority on the double question of the qualifications of the legitimate ruler and of the proper authority to ascertain those qualifications in specific persons (A.D. 658). The Shîʿites, themselves destined to split into many groups, broke away when, through the assassination of ʿAlî (A.D. 661) and the death in battle of his son, Ḥusain (A.D. 680), their desire for a caliph descended from the Prophet had been decisively frustrated. What had appeared to be a temporal issue—the quest for the rightful holder of the imamate, the leadership of the community—came to be the center of their theology. They revived the old motif of the epiphany of the divine in man and taught that the *imâm*, of necessity a descendant of ʿAlî, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, as the carrier of a particle of the divine light or substance was the indispensable guide to eternal bliss. And it would seem that the rise of the Muʿtazilite school was closely connected with the rise of the Abbasid dynasty (750–1258).

Majority Islam, usually called "Sunnite," has developed a rather limited concept of political authority. The Sunnite state is definitely not a welfare state, and it is not, like the Greek state, concerned with the happiness, *eudaimonia*, of its members.[11] The function of the Muslim state is well defined by Ghazzâlî when he explains that doubtless one of the purposes of the Lord was the good organization of the religious life. Now this organization is not attainable without an *imâm* whose authority will be obeyed.[12] Thus the *imâm* and the state organization at his disposal have no other function than to make possible that life under God which the Canon Law has elaborated on the basis of authoritative text and tradition. The *imâm* must therefore protect the territory of Islam from encroachment by unbelievers, or even extend it, and must domestically keep law and order so that the believer can practice his religious duties in safety. The caliph is the successor of Muḥammad as leader of the community; but, in his capacity as prophet and legislator, Muḥammad cannot have a successor. The caliph sees to it that the injunctions of the Prophet as interpreted by the orthodox jurisconsults are carried out, but he has no right to inter-

pret them himself, let alone to add to or abrogate them. He will issue executive orders which have to be obeyed, he will impose taxes beyond those allowed by Revelation; but in a sense this activity of his will always be tainted with illegality; it will be dangerous for the pious to get caught in administration and especially in the administration of justice. The canon-law judge, the *qāḍī*, will find himself unable to take care effectively of all contingencies; another type of court, that of "wrongs," *maẓālim*, will be developed in which procedure is not bound by canon-law tradition and therefore is more readily adaptable to the conditions of the day. In almost every Islamic country there developed at one time or another the characteristic parallelism of law codes, one the unalterable *sharʿ*, the canon law in the systemization of one of the four recognized law schools, the other a code of "secular" origin, be it that of the conquering Mongols in Persia or a code arising gradually from custom and royal decisions, as in Egypt and Turkey. In practice the tendency has always been to confine the application of the *sharʿ* to matters of personal statute, so as to make the call for restoration of the *sharʿ* to full authority over all provinces of the legal life of the community a regular part of the program of conservative reformers.

The complete intertwining of the secular and the religious in a political issue becomes very real in the words which ʿAlī addressed to his soldiers before the battle of Ṣiffīn (A.D. 657):

Sacrifice yourselves! You are under the eyes of the Lord and with the cousin of His prophet. Renew your charge and disdain flight, for it will disgrace your offspring and mean the Fire for you on the Day of Reckoning. Before you are this great Sawâd [the fruitland of Iraq] and those large tents! Let blood flow profusely. For Satan is halting on his hill spreading out his two arms; he has stretched forth one hand for the assault and drawn back one foot to retreat, firmly implanted he will not budge until the truth manifests itself. But you will have the better of the struggle; God is with you and He will not allow you to lose [the merit] of your deeds![13]

In contrast to the Sunnite rulers, the Shīʿite *imâm's* "are the mediators between God and mankind. Except by their intercession it is impossible for men to avoid the punishment of God."[14] The existence of an *imâm* is not a matter of expediency, as is that of a Sunnite ruler; it is a metaphysical necessity. Mankind is in permanent need of guidance, and divine guidance is vouchsafed only through the sinless *imâm*. From this it follows that the *imâm* has legislative prerogatives. It does not follow, however, that the *imâm*

must be in power or even that he must be visible to the mass of mankind. In fact, for the majority of the Shî'ites the last historically traceable *imâm*, Muḥammad Abû'l-Qâsim, removed himself from sight (in A.D. 879) but continues his spiritual function as the Hidden *Imâm*, who at God's appointed time will return and openly take up the government of the world. The present rulers are but his stadtholders, so to speak, whose authority derives from him. As late as 1906 the first constitution of Persia embodied the statement that parliament was to be established with the agreement and consent of the (Hidden) Imam of the Age.[15]

There cannot be equality between those who have and those who spurn absolute truth. Muḥammad extended limited recognition to those religious groups that possessed a book, such as the Jews and the Christians. The pagan was to be summoned to conversion or death; the scripturary was to remain outside the solidarity-circle of the ruling class unless he left his denomination voluntarily. Covenants affiliated the non-Muslim denominations to the Muslim state by according them autonomy in their internal affairs. Non-Muslims were liable to taxation beyond that imposable on Muslims, subjected to legalized social and professional discrimination, excluded from military service, and, in theory, barred from executive government office. They reproduced on a more parochial scale the organization of the Muslim state. This state came to harbor an increasing number of religiopolitical enclaves, owing to the tendency, already apparent in the late Roman and Byzantine empires, for unsuccessful sectarian movements to settle in an outlying province and organize as a semi-independent and statelike society.

Whether or not Muḥammad had in the course of his career come to envisage his mission as addressed to all mankind, the Muslim community did so interpret it. To spread the faith and to widen the Muslim-ruled territory was one of the principal duties of the caliph. The Law did not recognize the possibility of peace with the unbelievers, although expediency might require long periods of truce. But the task of extending the realm of truth on earth will not be fulfilled as long as non-Muslims remain in control of any part of this globe.

II

The tendencies inherent in the origins of Islam were to mature under the influence of those, in a sense, accidental contacts which

grew out of the historical setting of the period and, more specifically, the conquest by the Muslims of the high-civilization areas of Persia, Syria, and Egypt.

In assessing the Islamic achievement, it must be realized that the backwardness of the Arabian Peninsula in relation to the cultural level of the neighboring countries made the early development of Islam largely a process of adjustment to the traditions of the older Near Eastern civilizations. The mental and political energy of the invaders prevented their absorption by the more numerous and more advanced subject peoples. Proselytism increased with the passing of time, and after four centuries Hither Asia (except for Byzantine territory) had become overwhelmingly Muslim. For some time conversion was politically and socially incomplete as long as it was not followed up by affiliation as a client with an Arab tribe, but gradually this uncanonic requirement lapsed and the non-Arabs became full-fledged Muslims in their own right.

Jewish and Christian thought-motifs had been instrumental in the formation of the Prophet's ideas; biblical and haggadic lore permeate the koranic narratives. His very monotheism was developed at least partially in controversy against Christian trinitarianism. But the way of life imposed by Muḥammad, the ritual of the pilgrimage, and, on the level of verbalization and argumentation, a certain prephilosophical crudeness—all this was genuinely Arab; and, with the pilgrimage anchored among the essentials of the faith and the Koran the permanent point of departure for theological thought, much of the Arab heritage has been preserved. It was not only the partial identification of Islam and Arabism through the development of Arabic into the representative language of Muslim civilization and the inalienable prestige of the Arabs as the compatriots of the "Best of Mankind" and the rulers of the early empire which helped to keep an Arabic veneer on the composite culture of medieval (and modern) Islam. It was much rather the development of original forms of presentation like the *ḥadīth*, prophetic saying, with its witness-chain, *isnād*, and text, *matn*, and its expansion into histories like the *Sīra* ("biography") of the Prophet by Ibn Isḥâq (d. 767) or the *Annals* of Tabarî (d. 923). And although on occasion the originality of the form may be questioned, the perfect acculturation is beyond doubt. The Muslim scholars sometimes voiced their consciousness of having ap-

propriated foreign materials or foreign forms, but not a single borrowing proved effective, let alone lasting, unless Arabized in terminology and cast into a familiar thought-pattern.

Acquaintance with Christian theology compelled the reluctant Muslims to overhaul and make explicit their faith in the terms of Greek thought-categories, a repetition of the process through which, some centuries earlier, Christianity had attained its intellectual elaboration. This developmental analogy constitutes one cause for that conspicuous unity of feeling and thinking in which East and West are tied, unconsciously for the most part, throughout the Middle Ages. Greek philosophy, especially Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic and, to a less degree, Stoic, was studied intensively during the ninth and tenth centuries. But in philosophy as well as in less crucial fields, like literary theory, the age was not prepared to accept unadulterated Hellenism. The Islamic peripatetics, *faläsifa* (plural of *failasúf, philosophos*) always remained outside the pale as far as the feeling of the majority was concerned, while the Mu'tazila, although often decried as heretics, always "belonged," even as Qudâma's (d. 922) literary system, despite the clarity of its Greek-inspired categorization, never achieved the success which came to the less complete and fairly disorganized system of Ibn al-Mu'tazz (d. 908), who had been better able to Arabize what he had learned from classical masters.

The religious needs of the community, to which, in the last analysis, theology will have to bow, were barely touched by foreign ideas. The great dispute of the ninth century—the relation of God to His Book, a replica in one sense of the problem of the relation of the Logos to the Father and in another a special application of the problem of divine accidents—led to government intervention on the side of the Mu'tazila, who pronounced the Koran created by, and thus secondary to, God so as to avoid the "polytheistic" solution of positing two entities existing *ab aeterno*. Orthodoxy considered the Book as uncreate and coeval with Allâh. Popular sentiment was with the orthodox, and in due time the government yielded. The boundless reverence for the Book which had inspired orthodox argument then came to express itself in the startling, but emotionally satisfying, absurdity of a doctrine which declared even the actual copy of the Book in the believer's hand and his actual recitation from it as uncreate. Greek thought, especially of the postclassical period, was better able to penetrate sectarian circles when the attempt was made to Islamize Gnostic concepts toward

the end of the millennium. But, while the formal framework and the logical tooling would be Hellenistic in a general sense, koranic and Islamic materials and associations would provide the factual or fictional core. Similarly, the Hellenization (largely through Syriac mediation) of mystical terminology and (in part) theory must have eluded the pious, owing to its perfect integration in the traditional language of devotion.

In the sphere of scientific activities, on the other hand, the consciousness of a definite distinction between indigenous and foreign sciences never disappeared, however much the Muslim scholars might have made their own and added to the classical bequest. The native or Arabic sciences explored essentially religion and language, branching out into koranic exegesis, koranic criticism (i.e., the study of the readings of the text), the science of Tradition (*ḥadîth*), jurisprudence, and scholastic theology; and grammar, lexicography, rhetoric, and literature, respectively. The foreign sciences, *ʿulûm al-awâʾil* (literally, "the sciences of the ancients") were defined by the Spaniard, Ibn Ṭumlûs (d. 1223), as those common to all peoples and religious communities, as opposed to such sciences as had been peculiarly developed by Islam.[16] They are primarily the prepaedeutic, physical, and metaphysical sciences of the Greeks: the various branches of mathematics, philosophy, natural history (zoology, botany, etc.), medicine, astronomy, music, magic, and alchemy.[17]

The study of these foreign sciences, however intense and fruitful, never fought clear of a measure of distrust on the part of the pious. In fact, the animosity toward these studies increased in the later Middle Ages, and there can be little doubt that the hostility was called forth not only by the subject matter but also by the foreign and non-Muslim authorities on which they largely relied. The pious is to avoid any science that might endanger his faith. He is to heed the fundamental division of the sciences, not as foreign and native, but as (religiously) praiseworthy and blameworthy. All sciences are blameworthy that are useless for this or the other world. The Prophet is alleged to have prayed to God to protect him against useless knowledge. Orthodox theology inclined toward an interpretation of "useful" as necessary or helpful for the practice of religion, *ʿamal*. In this manner two semi-independent strands of intellectual effort were cultivated side by side, with the ancient sciences slowly losing out in the perpetual struggle between the theological and the philosophical-scientific approach.

The civil wars shifted the political center of the empire from

Arabia, first to Syria and then (*ca.* A.D. 750) to ʿIrâq. The Abbasid rulers in Baghdâd carried through what might be called the transformation of the state from the patrimonial to the "rational" stage, a process that had already been started toward the end of the Syrian period. The administration was stabilized on the Sassanian model: the number of government bureaus increased, their functions were more clearly defined, and chancellery procedure was meticulously regulated. In the tenth century the administration of the caliph worked through about a dozen central boards, *dîwâns*, such as the War Office, the Board of Expenditure (concerned mostly with the requirements of the court), the State Treasury, the Dispatch Board, and the General Post Office (which also discharged the duties of the secret police). The vizier presided over the heads of the individual *dîwâns*. The provinces that were represented in the capital by managing boards were governed by an army commander together with a chief of the civil administration, whose main function was tax-gathering. It was usually the first step to local independence when both offices were entrusted to the same person. The annual budget was carefully worked out, and the growth of the appropriation for the court at the expense of public services, such as maintenance of border fortifications or road-building, in the tenth century mirrors the decline of the empire and some of its causes.[18] The chancellery was staffed by literary men, who in their relation to the court played a role comparable to that of the humanists in the bureaus of Western states during the Renaissance.

By and large, Islam had been able to win the first loyalty of the masses, but it was unable to eliminate nationalism as a social and political force. The non-Arab nations compensated for their depressed status by playing up their cultural accomplishments and the deeds of their ancestors. They reproached the Arabs for their barbarous manners and customs and raked up tribal scandals with a view to casting doubts on that paramount pride of the Arab, his genealogy. The Arabs struck back, particularly after Persian influence at the Abbasid court had come to outweigh theirs, basing their claim to superiority above all on their kinship with the Messenger of God and then on the unexcelled richness of their language and the matchless beauties of their poetry. The level of these discussions is somewhat childish but not much more so than that of similar contests between Greeks and barbarians regarding their respective contributions to civilization in the Hellenistic age.

The political breakup that began in the eighth but became really acute only in the ninth and tenth centuries mostly followed national lines. Spain, Berber North Africa, and Egypt in the west and the Iranian countries in the east regained their independence, *de facto* or *de jure;* even within the Arabic-speaking territory of Syria, ʿIrâq, and the peninsula the regional interests reasserted themselves. This breakup added Cairo and Cordova to the centers of Arabic-Islamic civilization. It was never completely repaired, but it did not impair the cultural coherence of the region. Scholars traveled freely throughout the Islamic world, statesmen passed easily from the service of one prince into that of another. Common faith and common education overrode political divisions. Political and denominational, national and social, affiliations overlapped. The sects were international but usually had a localized political base and connections with definite strata of society, like that of the extreme Shiʿa with the artisan guilds. Sunnite Islam was very slow to exclude dissenters. The Prophet was quoted as saying that the difference of opinion within the community was a mercy from the Lord and as indicating that Islam would see the growth of seventy-three sects, all but one of which would be on the right path. The theologians, although hesitant when it comes to the precise definition of those to be excommunicated, are more rigorous than popular sentiment. The sects are by nature exclusive and likely to recognize true believership only in their own members. Ghazzâlî[19] bars the *falâsifa* from the community. He feels uncertain about Muʿtazilites, anthropomorphists, and "the other sects," as their errors are shaded delicately and are compensated by their holding correct beliefs in some respects. The only rule which in his view is established by the Koran is that the denier of the Prophet must be excommunicated. (This discussion must be understood in the light of the fact that there does not exist in Islam a body whose decision would be binding on all Muslims, although in specific cases a body of theologians may authorize the government to spill the blood of a defendant who has been found to harbor heretical tenets.) Of such dissenters as were not implicated in revolutionary movements it would seem that pantheistic philosophers were the most likely victims of persecution.

III

In every age self-expression is limited in part by convention that compels the speaker or writer to dwell on some, and disregard

C

other, aspects of his experience, and in part by the heritage of forms and imagery of which the individual may dispose.

Arabic literature, like Greek and Roman, is very conscious of the peculiar requirements of the several kinds, but its repertory of kinds is considerably smaller than that of classical antiquity. Of the three basic genres which antiquity developed, drama and epic are absent. Poetry rates higher than prose (an occasional dissenting theorist notwithstanding) because it demands the greater skill. The ability to master the intricacies of prosody and the formal rules binding the various types of poetry attracts the admiration of the public. The public and, even more, the average critic, who as a rule started out as a grammarian and lexicographer, insist on the maintenance of traditional norms—the ode, *qaṣīda*, must begin with reflections on bygone love and preferably refer to the scene of this love, now forsaken; the poet must profess to seek comfort by mounting a magnificent camel for a perilous ride through the desert; and he must conclude by addressing a request to a high-placed personality or by praising his tribe (or himself) or acting as spokesman for his group on some political issue. The classical, i.e., pagan, tradition remained the strongest single strain in Arabic poetry throughout the Middle Ages and down to the beginning of the twentieth century, although Persian (e.g., introduction of new meters and the banqueting song) and Hellenistic influences (e.g., new attitudes in love poetry) were absorbed readily enough.

The real centers of pre-Islamic civilization were urban settlements, but its literature was dedicated to the glorification of Bedouin ideals. The authority accorded it kept an incongruous note of desert lyrics in Islamic poetry. The early Abbasid age witnessed a remarkable efflorescence of poetical achievement. Modes were found to capture the colorful gaiety of the court, the moralizing sentiment of the repenting libertine, and that subtilized and worshipful love which was destined to pass through Spain into the songs of the Troubadours, along with some of the complicated prosodical forms of which the Spanish Arabs were fond. Modernistic poets toyed with new meters of lighter rhythm, while the conservatives used the inherited framework for a display of verbal virtuosity. Under the patronage of the courts and of the dignitaries of the empire, the poet became the mouthpiece of the political powers; his economic and social status rose in many instances, but poetry lost what the poets may have gained. Reckless eulogizing and equally reckless lampooning, the need to outdo the predecessor and the rival in giving vent to the same kind of sentiments and aspira-

tions, accompanied by a taste which confined the poet to a limited body of subject matter and which applauded originality in the successful recasting of the familiar motif—this combination of trends led to the increasing paralysis of creativeness and to the slowly dulling sparkle of verbal tours de force that are so characteristic of the poetry of the later Middle Ages. Only mysticism preserved its productive independence by providing the poet with an experience too strong to be fully dominated by convention. Here the danger was not traditionalism but abstruseness.

The impressionistic taste of the Arab is reflected in his insistence on the perfection of the individual verse rather than of the composition of the whole; in prose, in his preference for anecdote and sketch instead of extended narrative; only popular prose exceeds moderate length but its tales actually consist of a collection of semicoherent episodes.

Consistently planned and carefully executed composition appears to be the prerogative of the Persians, who developed from a tradition of historical writing an even greater tradition of epic representation, with their own history, romance, and mysticism providing successively the subjects most favored by the public. The Persians, who also developed a religious drama centering on the death of Ḥusain at Kerbela (A.D. 680), surpassed the Arabs in creative imagination, perhaps also in a willingness to abandon themselves to the intoxicating associations of figurative and symbolic speech. Fundamentally, however, their taste was the taste of the Arabs; and, on the whole, the literary taste of Islam paralleled that of the medieval West—in its submission to formal tradition, its intellectualization, its learned character, its emphasis on technique, its predilection for "gold and glitter" and for description in general, and most of all in its craving for *gharába*, *curiositas*, the startling, the strange, the unusual. The Muslim poet wishes to astound the hearer. As in the European *sccentismo*, his *concetti* are meant to induce a feeling of wonderment and surprise, of *maraviglia*, *ʿajab*. What imagery and witticism are supposed to effect in poetry, digressions, the insertion of *mirabilia*, and rapid shifts from subject to subject will do in prose. The flagging of the reader's attention is to be avoided by every means, and it seems that the reader was unwilling to concentrate on one theme for a prolonged period of time; so episodic distraction and the near-destruction of coherent composition appeared imperative even to some of the greatest littérateurs.

The conquest of subject matter through a deepening of the

psychological interest in man was successful only in the unreflected presentation of persons and incidents, in which again the authors of the ninth and tenth centuries excelled. However, a certain discretion, which is still characteristic of the Muslim manner, has prevented the literary analysis of the human soul and with it the rise of a psychologically adequate biography in the Greek and modern sense of the word. This is true in spite of the fact that the collections of biographies which Islam has produced are amazing achievements as regards the accumulation of material and that the Western Middle Ages have nothing remotely comparable to offer. The Muslim writer is a keen observer of emotions, but he confines his portrayal of them to the religious tract or the autobiographical description of conversion and perhaps the historical anecdote. Only devotional poetry benefited.

Scholarship (outside the natural sciences), which went through a renascence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, better preserved its insistence on the creative contribution but, at the same time, adapted its requirements to cover the majority of the works of the declining age. ʿAlmawî (d. 1573) quotes an earlier authority for this statement:

> Literary activity has seven subdivisions: (1) The creation of something new. (2) The correction of the shortcomings which exist in a particular work. (3) The indication of the various mistakes (found in a particular work). (4) The explanation of difficulties which excessive brevity has caused in a particular work. (5) The shortening of tedious lengthy passages, without complicating the understanding of the whole work. (6) The proper arrangement of badly arranged material in a manner which would as little as possible disturb (the original arrangement). And (7) the proper arrangement of materials which were badly arranged in the work of a predecessor, in an intelligent manner which would make the new work more suitable for didactic purposes.[20]

Pre-Islamic Arabia's contribution to the arts did not go beyond her achievement in poetry. There was no native tradition in the fine arts on which Islam could build. So "art in Islamic countries is a derivative of the classical traditions followed in various Oriental countries preceding the Arab conquest. Sometimes this influence is rather pure and direct; in other cases the influence came by way of Sassanian and Coptic art. There are also extraneous influences, such as those from India."[21]

The austerity which Islam in its ceremonial aspects never lost denied to craftsmanship the incentive of working precious metals for mosque treasuries and put a brake on architectural exuberance. The mosque is originally a bare and simply articulated building;

in the Arab countries an open court with fountains for the ritual ablutions is usually larger than the mosque proper. A tower from which the call to prayer is sounded adds a striking feature to the complex of buildings. The walls of the interior, unless they remain simply whitewashed, are decorated with ornamentalized script-bands of koranic verses and the names of the Prophet and his "Well-Guided" successors. Often the script is placed on enameled tiles, whose soft colors and designs tend to relieve the harsh calm of the empty hall without narrowing it down. The age-old aversion to pictorial representation of living beings, which has asserted itself in Hither Asia in several periods within different civilizations, has in Islam crystallized in the much-quoted saying, attributed to the Prophet, that the artist will be asked on Judgment Day to breathe life into the figures he wrought and that he will be condemned to the Fire if unable to do so. Since there were no saints in early and in official Islam, painting in any case would have had to concentrate on worldly subjects. Departure from lifelikeness was the device that the Islamic artist used to avoid the presumption of "creating" living beings. The book-painter, especially the Persian, did not shy away from portraying scenes of Muslim history and of the life of Muḥammad, even venturing at times to picture the Prophet himself. But, in spite of the superb development of miniaturing, the religiously sanctioned prejudice stunted the growth of painting and completely barred sculpture. Architecture and the so-called "minor arts," prominently including calligraphy, remained the principal areas in which the Islamic artist was able to express himself. Decoration largely took the place of representation. *A horror vacui* caused every available space on wall, manuscript, or vase and platter to be covered with luxuriant, laboriously interlaced ornaments, in which end merges into beginning, fragments of Scripture into lineaments without rational meaning. The fully decorated mosque is still austere, but no longer simple. The ornament is designed to blur the clarity of the architectural plan. In taste and intent Islamic art is as far removed from its classical inspiration as is Islamic poetry from the classical inspiration of its theory.

IV

This world is no more than a proving-ground on which man prepares for the final judgment. It will surely come to an end, and the signs by which mankind will know the approach of the Day

of Reckoning have been revealed in many an eschatological tradition. History is restricted to a comparatively short period. If it is to be told as far as unfolded, the tale must begin with Creation and record the revelations accorded to the several peoples and tell of the rise and decline of kings and empires in the shadow of God's favor and God's wrath. With Muḥammad the beginning of the last phase is reached, and before too long the prelude to eternity will have died away. Imbedded between two metaphysical pivots, Creation and Judgment, man's life in history is but an episode whose true cause in God's essence or will remains inscrutable. Nevertheless, the Muslim evinces great interest in the events that make up this episode. He is fascinated with man's actions, and he is a keen and accurate recorder. The enormous collections of material which Islamic civilization has produced tend to personalize the historical process, to avoid delving into underlying causes and seeking for a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of historical forces. There was profound understanding of the mechanics of political growth and disintegration, but only occasional attention was given to the social and economic background and the reasons for the appeal of ideologies. Some slight and puzzling evidence could perhaps be adduced for the existence of an undercurrent of philosophical history. What is certain, however, is a strong interest in political theory or perhaps in a peculiar combination of political science as the systematic description of government and political theory as its normative doctrine. This is to say that Islam is lacking in a comparative study of constitutions, that it was not inclined to investigate the operation of the state in the abstract, and that it remained completely uninterested in the forms of political life that had developed outside Muslim civilization. The description of the functioning of the Muslim state is most adequate when it comes to the detail of its judicial and executive administration. In the presentation of the role of the caliph, one senses the uneasy efforts of the author to harmonize the ideal task and the humble facts of his period. The Law has laid down unalterable principles, never envisaging the increasing incapacity of the Prince of the Believers to exercise even his more modest duties. So theory is compelled to compromise, to stretch the concept of election to include election by one qualified voter—in other words, to sanction the actual situation in which the caliph is appointed by his predecessor or the military leader who happens to be in control. Even the possibility of a plurality of leaders of the community has to be ad-

mitted. As in other ages and other civilizations, the theory of power comes to be a weapon in the fight for power.[22]

Too late to influence Islamic thought but in time to exploit the political and cultural experience of the Muslim West before its downfall in Spain and its intellectual ruin in North Africa, Ibn Ḫaldûn, statesman, judge, and historian (d. 1406), attempted an interpretation of the process of history. History, he explains at the beginning of his celebrated *Prolegomena* to his *Universal History*, is one of the branches of knowledge which are handed on from people to people and generation to generation; it is attractive even to the lowly and is eagerly sought after by the kings and equally appreciated by lettered and unlettered. Outwardly, it seeks to retrace the happenings that have marked past centuries and empires. It attracts by telling of the changes that people have undergone and of the deeds done by the divers nations ere they were summoned off the stage. In its essence, *bâṭin*, history is examination and verification of facts, exact investigation into their causes, profound knowledge of how events happened and what their origin was. Thus history emerges as an important branch of philosophy.[23]

On the basis of source criticism, whose guiding principle is to measure the past by the present and to reject what experience shows to be impossible now, Ibn Ḫaldûn arrives at a thorough analysis of the political organism; and he presents his results with equal emphasis on psychological and historical fact. He lays bare the life-cycle of empires, from nomadism through conquest and subsequent corruption in urban life to decline and displacement from power. Civilization presupposes urbanism, but city life leads to degeneracy, and the quest for an improved existence draws ever new waves of barbarian nomads into the eddy of acculturation, where their passionate feeling of solidarity cools off, their cohesion weakens, and even the physical basis of their power is corroded. Three or perhaps four generations suffice to turn the wheel full circle.

This neutral thesis is Islamized by the recognition of the function of prophecy; for within the historical process man seeks salvation quite independently of the fate of his society. And it is the prophets whom God "has made to be means of access between Him and His creatures, that they may instruct men as to what is best for them, and may exhort them to accept their guidance, and may keep them from the Fire, and guide them in the way of salvation."[24] A religious bond like adherence to the same prophetic revelation

will create the strongest possible solidarity feelings, so that groups united and prompted to aggressive action by a religious impulse will be most likely to enter successfully the cycle of empire-building.

Unless he were to reject it, the Muslim philosopher had to justify Revelation in the light of natural reason or else to appraise reason by weighing its conclusions against the insights conveyed by the Koran. To test the two means of cognition by each other and to ascertain their compatibility or their complementary character may have seemed a work of piety to the philosopher but actually was an encroachment on the autonomy of Revelation and a switch to anthropocentrism, even if the result was a refusal to recognize two independent truths based, respectively, on faith and on reason. When Ibn Ṭufail (d. 1185), the contemporary and compatriot of Averroës (d. 1198), demonstrates in his tale of *Ḥayy b. Yaqẓân* ("Alive, the Son of Awake") that an isolated human being by considering "philosophically" the world about him could, guided by reason alone, arrive at the verities guaranteed by Revelation, he not only brings down Revelation to the human level but voices a prouder view of man's potentialities than could be acceptable to the theologians. To conceive of Revelation as systematizing and verifying the fundamental truths deducible from reasoned experience will deprive the incidental, the factual-historical, even much of the legal, content of the Book of its significance. As society depends for its organization largely on this concrete and philosophically less relevant part of Revelation, philosophy will have to become esoteric in order to eschew a hopeless conflict. When Ḥayy toward the end of his life is found by the vizier of the neighboring king, he sails to the king's island to preach the pure faith but soon returns, having realized that the multitude demands a sensuous adumbration of the truth rather than the truth itself. In the light of history, the tale—an elaboration of an idea of Avicenna (d. 1037), and probably one of the sources of Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* —comes to symbolize the state of Muslim civilization as the Middle Ages draw to a close. Philosophy reaches out far and high but is denied efficacy in its own society as Islam hardens and contracts to remain intact in the face of recession. The insights of the esoterics, smaller and smaller enclaves within a resurgent and zealous orthodoxy, and especially Averroës' conception of Aristotelianism, are opened by translation to the West but put out of sight, not to say forgotten, in the East.

Every civilization and every age favor a limited number of human types for whom they will provide the fullest means of self-realization, while denying it to an even larger number for whose peculiar gifts the prevailing pattern affords no socially meaningful use. The athlete and the rhetor, idolized in antiquity, are unknown in Islam; the peasant, idealized by romanticism as the repository of genuine folk culture, is held in low esteem by Islam and never attracts the attention of the learned. Islam prefers the sedentary to the nomad, the city-dweller to the villager. It accepts the artisan but respects the merchant. The sword ranks lower than the pen. Religious knowledge is more desirable than wealth. Outside the circles of the canon lawyers, gnosis comes to be rated above rational knowledge. The prophet as the ideal head of the hierarchy, the mystic saint, the visionary, the ascetic (whose abstention does not, as a rule, include sexual self-denial), on the one hand, the scholar, the jurist-theologian, and the littérateur, on the other, are encouraged by this civilization. Power is fascinating and awesome but transient, the king and the officials a disturbing body in the peace-loving but war-ridden, industrious, and exploited community.

The prevailing attitude toward power is skepticism. The caliph ʿUmar (634–44) begins a letter to his governor at Baṣra with the words: "People have an aversion from their rulers, and I trust to Allâh that you and I are not overtaken by it, stealthily and unexpectedly, or by hatreds conceived against us."[25] As an executive officer, the ruler is unrestricted. The absoluteness of his power was never challenged. The Muslim liked his rulers terror-inspiring, and it seems to have been *bon ton* to profess one's self awe-struck when ushered into their presence. "For in the grades of existence and the ranks of the intelligibles, after the Prophetic function, which is the supreme limit of man's attainment, there is no rank higher than kingship, which is naught else than a Divine gift."[26] Ibn aṭ-Tiqṭaqà wrote in 1302:

Know that a king has attributes peculiar to himself, which distinguish him from the commons. Amongst them is the fact that, when he likes a thing, the people like it, and when he dislikes a thing, the people dislike it, either naturally or so pretending thereby to curry favor with him. Hence the saying, "The people follow the faith of their rulers." . . . Another attribute peculiar to the ruler is that when he shows aversion from a man that man becomes faint-hearted, even though undamaged by him, and when he approaches a man that man is encouraged, even though unbenefited by him. Plain aversion or approach achieves that, and only a ruler has this attribute.[27]

The caliph Maʾmûn (813–33) is quoted as saying: "The best life has he who has an ample house, a beautiful wife, and sufficient means, who does not know us and whom we do not know."

The medieval Muslim is not a citizen in the Greek or the post-Renaissance sense of the word. The vicissitudes of government are his concern only when faith is at war with unbelief. He assumes no responsibility for social or civic betterment beyond defraying his canonical obligations to the authorities and to his fellow-men. He is frequently impatient with his rulers and thinks little of rioting, but on the whole he is content to let the princes play their game. During the reign of the Flavians (A.D. 70–96), Apollonius of Tyana was accused by some of influencing the young to lead a retired life,[28] and the same reproach was hurled against the Christians, but no Muslim ever was rebuked for damaging the civic spirit. No Muslim government ever tried to develop civic sentiment. Accordingly, there was little attachment to the political body to which one happened to belong or to any particular regime (except on sectarian grounds). But there was an overwhelming feeling for the oneness of the Muslim community and a realization that any political sacrifice was justified to enable the community to continue under the Law as far as possible. Ghazzâlî says:

> There are those who hold that the imamate is dead, lacking as it does the required qualifications. But no substitute can be found for it. What then? Are we to give up obeying the law? Shall we dismiss the *qâḍîs*, declare all authority to be valueless, cease marrying and pronounce the acts of those in high places to be invalid at all points, leaving the populace to live in sinfulness? Or shall we continue as we are, recognizing that the imamate really exists and that all acts of the administration are valid, given the circumstances of the case and the necessities of the actual moment?[29]

The education of the nontheologian centered on literature and, broadly speaking, the humanities in general. Grammatical, philosophical, and historical questions were assured of wide interest. The relative rank of the major poets was hotly argued. The demand for *polymathia*, together with the accelerating accumulation of material in all fields, created the need for scientific encyclopedias as well as for encyclopedias of the gentleman's knowledge that treated their subjects with the aid of illustrative verse, anecdotes, and apophthegms, provided the reader with quotable phrases, and attempted to instruct while entertaining. Ibn Qutaiba (d. 889), the author of the ʿUyûn al-aḫbâr, or "Sources of Information," one of the earliest specimens of the literary encyclopedia,

devotes its ten sections to discussions of government, war, nobility, natural disposition and character, learning and scholars, asceticism, social relations, human needs of all kinds, food, and women. He explains that he has dealt in separate books with drinks, the basic data of the sciences, poetry, and the interpretation of dreams. This is how Ibn Qutaiba characterizes the contents of the first section of the *Uyûn:*

> It contains the narratives about the station of government, the differences of its circumstances, its mode of life, the deportment the ruler stands in need of with regard to his companions; about his addresses, his transactions, his consultations; the principles he has to adhere to in selecting his officials, judges, chamberlains, scribes and governors, in order that they may follow his ways in their decisions. It also contains curious sayings and verses appropriate to these narratives.

The whole work he has composed as "an eye-opener for the learned, as an education for the leaders of men and those whom they lead, as a place for the kings to rest in from the toil of endeavor and weariness."[30]

When about one hundred years later the vizier Ibn Sa'dân (in office 983/4–985/6) asks the great littérateur Abû Ḥayyân at-Tauḥîdî (d. 1023) to spend his evenings in his company, they discuss such subjects as the condition of man, the nature of the soul, the characters of important contemporaries, the outstanding qualities of the Arabs as compared to other nationalities, the relative usefulness to the ruler of accountancy and stylistics, and the superiority of grammar over logic.[31] At a later period mysticism would probably have figured prominently in their conversations.

v

As in its rise the political configuration of the period became significant only through the willingness of Islam to respond, so in its decline did the barbarian invasions and usurpations succeed only because of the waning devotion to its original political ideal. The concept of the caliph as God's trustee and as the guarantor of a community life under God had ceased to rouse and rally the Muslims long before the Mongols conquered Baghdâd and executed the last Abbasid caliph (A.D. 1258). Outside of Persia, which they never subjugated, the population was only mildly interested when the Ottoman Turks displaced their rulers, who had for some time been mostly foreigners with more than a touch of the robber-baron.

During the great age of Islam, Greek philosophy and Greek science had battered the walls of orthodoxy. Every advance in thought, in insight into the ways of nature, every effort devoted to acculturating and developing the offerings of classical antiquity, was, at the very least, energy withdrawn from the Law and pressure brought to bear on theology to catch up with the intellectual climate of the period so as to justify itself before the intellectual leadership.

While orthodoxy might take comfort in the realization that the Hellenized intelligentsia was small in numbers and without a real foothold among the mass of the believers, the sectarian movements were clearly popular revolts. Economic stress, social injustice, and the appeal of Shiʿite ideology in its integration into Islam of pre-Islamic—Gnostic and ancient Near Eastern—ideas had put the Sunnite government on the defensive as early as the end of the ninth century. By the end of the eleventh, the political situation of orthodoxy had become precarious. Emotionally it lost its hold as the Ṣūfīs emerged more and more as the bearers of the true religious life of the community. Ṣūfism had become the repository of the religious psychology of Islam, and its analysis of the religious life the timeless enrichment of human self-interpretation and the most delicate crystallization of the Muslim's spiritual aspirations. Dogmatically dangerous for its tendency toward a *unio spiritualis* between God and man, toward the ecstatic realization of a commingling of substances, divine and human, it was even more dangerous to the community by its implicit antinomianism—if the Law is not needed for union, why observe it after union has been attained? The quietist attitude of the mystics strengthened the antipolitical outlook of the faithful. Mysticism, as it had come to be the real religion of the Muslim world, gave final approval to that aversion from the political life and from civic education, to that defective, because actionless, humanism which is far and away the most important single cause of the decay of Islamic civilization.

Orthodoxy finally mastered the crisis. The Crusades ended sectarian expansion. The Ayyubids gave Egypt after two hundred years its first Sunnite government (A.D. 1171). Heterodox Persia broke away politically from the Arabic-speaking world. Defeats and calamities drew the people closer to tradition. The perfecting of scholasticism safeguarded the orthodox position in theology. The decomposing stimulus of Greek thought seemed no longer needed when its methodological contribution had been absorbed. The sci-

ences receded under suspicion of heresy. The governments made ready to lend an arm to the orthodox reaction and assisted it through education and repression. What had been the caution of traditionalism became the rigor of fear and soon of death. The period knew that it was sterile and declining. Literary formalism and intellectual rigidity were to accommodate the unlettered, accompanied by hospitality to pre-Islamic popular beliefs, to the demoniacal world of Hellenistic magic as well as to the worship of the Ṣûfî saints. The theologians of the eleventh century, above all Ghazzâlî, secured Ṣûfism its place within orthodoxy. The Ṣûfî yielded his antinomianism and accepted a definition of union that ruled out consubstantiality of man and God; the orthodox spiritualized ritual worship along the lines of mystic experience. The emotive life of Sunnite Islam came to be concentrated in the Ṣûfî orders.

The Turkish conquest (completed early in the sixteenth century) stabilized the political situation of the Near East. It cut off most of the Islamic area from Europe. Simultaneously, the shift of commerce from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic sealed the economic decline of the area that had, however, set in before the age of discoveries had reduced the value of the Muslim merchant's monopoly on the carrying trade between India and the West. One outburst of reforming primitivism, the Wahhâbî movement (from the middle of the eighteenth century), broke the quiet of a sleepy age. The Arab countries especially, that had been the center of Muslim civilization, submitted apathetically to the twin domination of orthodoxy and the Turks. It was only with Napoleon's expedition to Egypt (in 1798) that, through the impact of Europe and the rise of local nationalisms in its wake, Muslim civilization regained the willingness to change, to experiment, to risk—in short, to live.

NOTES

1. Quoted by D. B. Macdonald, *Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence, and Constitutional Theory* (New York, 1903), p. 292.

2. Cf., e.g., Koran 2:282–83, on recording of debts. The best and most recent English translation of the Koran by R. Bell (*The Qur'ân* [Edinburgh, 1937–39]) offers an analysis of the 114 *sûras* or chapters. These chapters, which are of unequal length, owe their arrangement to the discretion of the government commission that had been charged with collecting the extant revelations into an authoritative Book. Cf. A. Guillaume, *The Traditions of Islam* (Oxford, 1924).

3. Cf. A. Guillaume, *The Traditions of Islam* (Oxford, 1924).

4. *Iḥyâ' 'ulûm ad-dîn* (Bûlâq, 1289/1872), I, 156; trans. E. E. Calverley, *Worship in Islam* (Madras, 1925), p. 90. Formalistic treatment or the application of the scholastic method is extended to literary theory from the twelfth century; it is very instructive to compare, e.g., 'Abdalqâhir al-Jurjânî's (d. 1078) *Asrâr al-balâgha* and

Dalā'il al-i'jāz with the completely "scholasticized" summary given by Jurjānī's admirer, the theologian Faḫr ad-Dīn ar-Rāzī (d. 1209) in his *Nihāyat al-i'jāz*.

5. Koran 6:39; repeated several times, e.g., 13:27 and 14:4; the translation is that of R. Bell.

6. Margaret Smith, *Studies in Early Mysticism in the Near and Middle East* (London, 1931), p. 175.

7. Margaret Smith, *Rābi'a the Mystic and Her Fellow-Saints in Islam* (Cambridge, 1928), pp. 102–3.

8. Abū Naṣr as-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-luma' fī 't-taṣawwuf*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (Leiden and London, 1914); Nicholson's summary of p. 10 on p. 4 of the Introduction.

9. Cf. *Luma'*, pp. 13–15.

10. *Mathnawī*, ed. trans. R. A. Nicholson (London, 1925–40), Book V, vss. 3225, 3230a, 3240.

11. Cf., e.g., Plato *Republic* 473D-E, and, later, Justin Martyr (*First Apology* iii. 2, 3), who quotes the passage.

12. *Al-Iqtiṣād fī 'l-i'tiqād* (Damascus, n.d.), p. 105; Spanish translation by M. Asín Palacios, *El justo medio en la creencia* (Madrid, 1929), p. 349.

13. Mas'ūdī, *Murūj*, ed. Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille (Paris, 1861–77), IV, 355–56. Cf. the religious war cries of the Byzantine armies.

14. Majlisī (d. 1699); quoted by D. M. Donaldson, *The Shī'ite Religion* (London, 1933), p. 344.

15. Cf. I. Goldziher, *Vorlesungen über den Islam* (2d ed.; Heidelberg, 1925), p. 223.

16. Cf. I. Goldziher, "Die Stellung der alten islamischen Orthodoxie zu den antiken Wissenschaften," *Abhandlungen der Berliner Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl.*, 1915, Abh. 8 (published in 1916), p. 3, n. 6, and *passim*.

17. Cf. R. A. Nicholson, *A Literary History of the Arabs* (London, 1907), p. 283. Ibn Ḫaldūn, *Prolegomena*, trans. De Slane (Paris, 1862–68), II, 425 ff., gives an interesting sketch of the development of the sciences in Islam. The Byzantines, not unlike the Muslims, distinguished between "our"—that is, Christian—learning, and "foreign," or "Hellenic"—that is, classical—learning.

18. On the organization of the state cf., e.g., R. Levy, *Sociology of Islam* (London, 1931–33), I, 276–398; II, 187–342.

19. *Op. cit.*, pp. 112–15 (trans., pp. 369–78).

20. Trans. F. Rosenthal, *The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship* (Rome, 1947), pp. 64–65.

21. R. Ettinghausen, in *The Arab Heritage*, ed. N. A. Faris (Princeton, 1944), p. 251.

22. Cf. H. A. R. Gibb, "Al-Māwardī's Theory of the Khilāfah," *Islamic Culture*, XI (1937), 291–302.

23. *Muqaddima* [i.e., *Prolegomena*] (Cairo, n.d.), pp. 3–4 (trans., I, 3–4).

24. Cairo, n.d., p. 91, trans. D. B. Macdonald, *The Religious Attitude and Life in Islam* (Chicago, 1909), p. 43.

25. Levy, *op. cit.*, I, 283–84.

26. Niẓāmī 'Arūḍī (fl. 1110–52), *Chahār Maqāla*, trans. E. G. Browne (London, 1921), p. 3.

27. Ibn aṭ-Ṭiqṭaqà, *Kitāb al-Faḫrī*, trans. C. E. J. Whitting (London, 1947), pp. 22–23.

28. Philostratos *Life of Apollonios* viii, 22.

29. *Iqtiṣād*, pp. 107–8; trans. Levy, *op. cit.*, I, 306.

30. Trans. J. Horovitz, *Islamic Culture*, IV (1930), 180 and 174.

31. Tauḥīdī, *Kitāb al-imtā' wa'l-mu'ānasa*, ed. A. Amīn and A. az-Zain (Cairo, 1939–44).[1]

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[1] See note (ii) of appendix.

GROWTH

II

THE BEGINNINGS OF CULTURE CONSCIOUS-
NESS IN ISLAM

ASIDE FROM the elements of religious verity recognized by the con-
temporaries in the message of the Prophet Muḥammad, the most
effective factor in attracting adherents to the new faith was its
ability to serve as a point of crystallization for a novel sociopolitical
unity. Settled life in Arabia had been suffering from the paradoxical
circumstance that its not inconsiderable economic and social or-
ganization had been developed under the shadow of the norms and
sanctions of the desert. Superior to their Bedouin neighbors in
every aspect of material civilization, the town dwellers remained
subservient to nomad culture patterns in terms of the human ideal
as well as of what minor intellectual or artistic aspirations they
would support.

Muḥammad, his own growth spurred by the malaise of town
life,[1] shattered the authoritativeness of the Bedouin outlook by
rejecting it as pagan—which meant that it was hostile to the
law of the one and only Lord and antiquated by the coming of
Islam. The reality of the religious relationship became the basis
of the new community whose members were kin by faith rather
than by blood. The fragmentation of the past was to be overcome
by integration, with the Prophet as the visible center of a social
grouping that was soon to constitute itself as a body politic with
strength to compete with and in a sense to absorb the tribal units
from which it recruited its members.

The superseding of tribal affiliation as the only effective identifi-
cation of the individual by identification with the social body of
Islam, which was at the same time more comprehensive in its
terms of admission (and therefore potentially more powerful) and
superior in its ideological adaptation to actual conditions in the
focal points of Arabian life, created the possibility of effective
identification of all speakers of Arabic. The Prophet had been sent
with an Arabic Book; despite the presence among the Muslims of
a number of foreign-born, the community of the Prophet was
clearly an Arab community in which tribal connection, a relic, as

31

it were, from the days of the Ignorance, was secondary to a bond whose religious and racial elements it must have been difficult for the individual believer to separate.

Both liberations were overdue. A "national" feeling among the Bedouin had become sporadically effective and to some extent articulate in the conflicts with the Persian overlords of the Mesopotamian fruitlands, and the townspeople had long striven, with greater success in Mecca, with less in Medina, to control the disruptive influence on their advancement and on their security of the unadapted features of nomad organization and ideology in their own midst. Islam, as with one stroke, justified and encouraged the town as the political center of a nation which was to be unified through an expansion that was almost required by its religious superiority. Acceptance of Islam both cemented and spiritualized the vague feeling of Arab unity that had so far found its main expression in the general recognition of the hypothesis of a common descent of the Arab-speaking inhabitants of the Peninsula (apart, perhaps, from South Arabia proper) and a consequent sense of separation from the ʿajam or barbaroi.

The complementary character of the Muslim and the Arab identifications made it difficult to tolerate the continuance of unconverted groups of Arab descent; the incomplete submersion of the traditional tribal into the religiously recommended Arab identification accounts in large measure for the early breakdown of Arab paramountcy in the caliphate, when political conflicts growing out of specifically Islamic problems came to be fought as intertribal wars of unprecedented dimensions. The decline of Arab power within the demesne of Islam, relative to that of other groups that had been Islamized during their sway, did not, however, in any way lessen that sense of superiority which the Muslim Arabs felt toward their pagan ancestors and that derived from their membership in "the best community" and from their kinship to the "seal of the prophets." In the middle of the ninth century al-Jâḥiẓ (d. 869) connects the greatness of the Quraish (the tribe of the Prophet as well as of the ruling dynasty) with the nature of their religion. He ascribes the decline of the Turkish Toghuzghuz to their acceptance of Manichaeanism, which he finds is even worse than Christianity in its emphasis on asceticism and pacifism, and adds: the Quraish (alone) among all the Arabs professed the religion of steadfast courage, dânû bi't-taḥammuṣ.[2] His contemporary, ʿUmâra b. ʿAqîl,[3] when taken to task by Maʾmûn (d. 833) for com-

paring in a verse his own situation with that of Hâtim Tayy and
Harim b. Sinân, two pre-Islamic heroes of generosity, tells the
caliph: "I am better than both of them: I am a Muslim while they
were unbelievers; and I am an Arab [as they were]."[4] ʿUmâra
would have fully endorsed the views of that personage in Jâḥiẓ'
Book of the Misers who warns against attachment to the fables of
the poets and the ignoramuses of the pagan period.[5] Gradually the
concept "Arab" widens in content to include those not of Arab
birth, as when (in the eleventh century?) the Persian town of
Busht, near Nîsâpûr, is called Busht al-ʿArab, Busht of the Arabs,
"because of the great number of its educated and [religiously] ex-
cellent people."[6]

This is how the poet ʿAlî b. al-Jahm, an Arab from Khurâsân
(d. 863), identifies his *qaum* or people:

1. If you [fem.] are ignorant of who my people are then ask me: where is proph-
   ecy and where the final decision?
2. And power firmly grounded in whose protection flash white cutting [swords]
   and lithe spears of ash-wood.
3. [And ask further] where are the pulpits, *manâbir*, and the practices of the
   Pilgrimage, *mashâʿir*, aṣ-Ṣafâ, and the corner [of the Kaʿba with the Black
   Stone; *ar-rukn*] and the upright Holy House?
4. Where are the pilgrims with shaven heads and shorn,[7] some leading the cir-
   cumambulation, others following suit?[8]
5. Where are the kings humbling their necks and the beasts pasturing safely
   and never attended?
6. Those are my people when you ask, and only the sensible questioner rids
   himself of his blindness.
7. Allâh knows well where He is placing his command [or: word, *amr*]—not is
   he who knows a word, *amr*, like him who is ignorant [of it].[9]

The problem of the variations of self-consciousness that inspired
the varying expressions of identification which we encounter
throughout the first four or five centuries of Islamic history is two-
faced; the genesis as well as the direction of the changing self-inter-
pretation requires examination. Contemporary consciousness of
culture contrasts was considerable. Jâḥiẓ, one of the most articulate
representatives of his time, speaks of a crisis of poetry due to the
lack of interest on the part of the Persians now in power in having
their genealogies praised and the memory of their gatherings
perpetuated.[10] He could have added that the new stratum of pa-
trons soon fell in with Arab custom.[11] Even should his observation
not stand the test of criticism, the awareness of differences in
taste seen as an instance of a wider cultural divergence would be

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remarkable as a definite step toward a reinterpretation of the Islamic identification as primarily (religious and) cultural rather than primarily (religious and) ethnic and/or political. It is the ever more complete development of Islam as a way of life over against a system of beliefs that gave the cultural identification its solid basis in reality.

The several aspects of this change in identification, which in retrospect can be seen to stem from the community's desire to maintain its cohesion as the *umma Muḥammadiyya* under the stress of disintegration into an agglomeration of none too stable national states, stand out sharply in the reaction of the Arab-Muslim rulers to the conditions of empire. It is the nature of and response to what may be called the "formative problems" which, principally during the period from 750 to 1050, determined the development and the peculiar quality of the Muslim cultural identification. The selection of such problems in the present context is directed by what experiences loomed especially large in the minds of the ruling Arab-Muslim group.

The unity of the Muslim empire "from Andalusia to Ṣanʿâ," to use the words of Abû Tammâm (d. 846),[12] had at the time of this poet ceased to be an empirical fact. Even when the whole *dâr al-Islâm* still constituted one single state, the differentiation of administrative practice in the several provinces made for difficulties and was seen as a problem by a man like Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d. 757), who was steeped in the centralizing tradition of Sassanian administration. As the caliph in the Muslim concept was not a lawgiver but merely the leader of the community with unlimited executive powers, the promulgation of an imperial law code was out of the question. Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ proposed to Manṣûr (754–75) that he should examine into the diverging doctrines of the law schools in the great cities as well as into the differences in the actual administration of justice, with a view to enacting his own decisions in the interest of uniformity.[13] The caliph, however, in accordance with the sentiment of the legists themselves, who considered disagreement in matters of this kind a divine favor, did not act on Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ's advice.[14]

The drive for political and cultural equality with the Arabs that had gained ground among the Islamized subject peoples, and especially the Persians, dominated in its various phases the intellectual history of the early Abbasid period (*ca.* A.D. 750–900). Actual political inferiority was to be compensated for by insistence

on historical seniority and cultural superiority.[15] With the rise to power of the Iranian element toward the end of the eighth century, Arab pride would draw comfort from the Arabic origin of Islam and support a "neoclassicist" reaction to that modernism in poetry whose greatest representative, Abû Nuwâs (d. 815). had been playing up his Persian descent and the Persian tradition in general.

In an outlying district such as Tabaristan the Arabs might be massacred, with their native wives assisting their attackers;[16] on the whole, however, the dispute tended to remain on the verbal and intellectual levels. Yet the naturalness of national loyalties came to be taken for granted. When Hâlid al-Barmakî advised Manṣûr against destroying the Îwân Kisrà, the Vaulted Hall of the Khosroes, in Ctesiphon the caliph ascribed his minister's attitude to his Persian origin.[17] Jâḥiẓ takes it as a sign of stupidity when an Indian slave considers the "fish carrying the Earth" and not the elephant of his native land the more marvelous creature.[18] The same Jâḥiẓ notes, without, however, furnishing any evidence, that Arab women had more intelligence, *a‘qal*, than did Persian, *‘ajam*, men.[19] Al-Ḥârithî, probably a contemporary of Jâḥiẓ, quotes ‘Auf b. al-Qa‘qâ‘, a companion of the Prophet, as not wishing his *maulà* to forsake Arab for foreign dishes.[20] Literary judgment glorified the crude and the uncouth in pre-Islamic poetry, in a conscious attempt to buttress the revival of Arabism with the prestige of a tradition which was in danger of becoming outmoded as archaic.[21] Significantly enough, Abû Tammâm, the leading exponent of this literary "neoclassicism," speaks of the battle of Ḍû Qâr in which, in A.D. 611, the pre-Islamic Bedouins had defeated the Persian army to vindicate a glory that seemed to be slipping from the Arabs' hands.[22] Altogether, Abû Tammâm is fond of linking his time with the pre-Islamic period. Thus he compares his patron even with relatively obscure heathens such as Qais b. Zuhair[23] or al-Hârith b. Muḍâḍ,[24] and he notes that Aḥmad b. abî Du’âd (d. 854), the intellectual leader of the governmental policy favoring the Mu‘tazila, sacrificed himself even more in behalf of the "justice and unity" of God ("*‘adl* and *tauḥid*," the watchword of the Mu‘tazila) than Ka‘b b. Mâma and Ḥâtim Ṭayy had done in the days of yore.[25] The comparison of national peculiarities became a favorite topic of polite conversation. Ma’mûn induces a discussion of the warlike qualities of Turks, Persians, and Khurasanians;[26] Jâḥiẓ notes the different tastes in food of Byzantines, Persians, and Bedouins;[27] and between 983/4 and 985/6 the vizier Ibn

Saʿdân still invites Tauḥîdî to discourse before him on the subject of national character.[28] Ibn al-Faqîh (*fl.* after 902) reports that the Arabs would call the pre-Islamic Persians *al-aḥrâr*, the free, "for they would revile without being reviled and enslave without being enslaved," but that Islam reversed the position—a statement that had long lost its basis in fact when the author repeated it.[29] On the whole, then, Persian prestige fared well. "Kisrawî," Khosroan, came to be used to indicate a truly royal style of life. Thus, Abû Dulaf al-ʿIjlî (d. 839/40 or 840/41), one of the grandees of the courts of Maʾmûn and Muʿtaṣim (833–842), speaks of himself as a man of "Khosroan style," *kisrawiyy al-fiʿâl.*[30] The poet al-ʿAttâbî (d. 823) spends a number of years on Persian-speaking territory because it is in the books of the Persians that one finds the ideas, while the Arabs possess merely the rhetoric and the classical language.[31] Some Persian circles would find it difficult to accept along with Islam the condemnation of their hero kings as heathens so, in a spurious tradition, the Prophet is presented as inquiring of Gabriel about the state in afterlife of Anûshirwân (531–579). Gabriel replies: "I was desirous to ask God concerning this matter, when behold, a voice came from God's Throne, saying, 'I would not torment in hell-fire kings who made my lands flourishing and my servants prosperous'."[32] More typical of the Persian attitude are, however, the verses of ʿIṣâbat al-Jarjarâʾî, composed during the revolt against the Banû Umayya (747–750):

1. The palaces are two—the Îwân [Kisrà] and Ghumdân;[33] the kingdom is twofold—Sâsân and Qaḥṭân.
2. *The* people are the Persians [Fâris], the [central] clime is Babel [ʿIrâq], Islam is Mecca, and the world Ḥurâsân.[34]

In a blending of Sassanian and Islamic traditions the religious element was clearly the only Arab contribution which the poet expressed himself as willing to accept. While the Abbasid government would, of course, not identify itself *ex professo* with the Sassanian heritage, it realized that Islam provided henceforth the sole means for peaceably continuing the co-existence in one empire of antagonistic national groups. Religion, expanding rapidly into a style of life in which bequests from many cultures would be integrated, might allow the rival nationalities to sink their hostility to an extent allowing for the perpetuation of the political status quo. Looking backward, the political failure of this expectation is only too manifest. The common religion was unable to prevent the caliphal empire from dissolving and to prevent that dissolution from follow-

ing largely national lines. Yet it was that policy of the Abbasids of emphasizing the oneness of their state and the *dâr al-Islâm* which promoted the substitution of the ideal unity of all Muslims, expressed in common faith, law, mores, and cultural aspiration, for that administrative unity which their declining government no longer was able to provide. It must be said that the mood of the Muslim subjects of the caliphs suggested a solution of this kind. Already before the fall of the Umayyads the Arab masses had come to respond most readily to religious issues. And of the Persians it was said in so many words that their enthusiasm to fight could be kindled only by a religious cause.[35] But it remains the merit of the caliphs to have seized the opportunity and to have transformed as best they could the basis of their rule as well as the current concept of the ruler. It was in this period that the Sassanian idea of the twinship of *dîn*, religion, and *sulţân*, power, or *mulk*, kingship (later: *daula*, empire), came into vogue.[36]

In a letter which Ma'mûn addressed, toward the end of his reign, to the governor of Baghdâd, he begins by setting forth his idea of the caliph's function.

That which God has a right to expect from His vice-gerents [caliphs] on His earth [and] those entrusted by Him with rule over His servants, upon whom He has been pleased to lay the maintenance of His religion, the care of His creatures, the carrying out of His ordinance and His laws, and the imitation of His justice in His world, is that they should exert themselves earnestly for God . . . and [part of that which He claims of them is] that they should begin that by making them grow in the right way, and by causing them to see [things] clearly, because this involves all their actions, and comprehends their portion of felicity in this world and the next. . . . The help of the Commander of the Faithful is alone in God, and his sufficiency is God, who is enough for him.[37]

It is a reflection of Iranian *Gottesgnadentum* which instills the feeling in Ma'mûn that, as caliph, he is entitled to legislate in dogmatics.[38]

The conception which the caliph entertains of his office is reflected in the views of his function expressed by his panegyrists. Abû Tammâm has God himself testify that Ma'mûn's guidance leads to spiritual satisfaction, *riḍâ*.[39] 'Attâbî says of the caliph that "he shepherds the community of Islam" as its *imâm* and "secures it its right" as its *amîn*, trustee.[40] 'Alî b. al-Jahm tells Mutawakkil (847–861):

1. Between your Lord—glorious is His name—and yourself is no one but the Prophet of Guidance;

2. You are molding yourself after his *sunna;* in it you will find your rescue, *najât,* from Him [i.e., His judgment] tomorrow.[41]

The purpose of this caliph's rule the poet sees in the fact that "God has ordained that He will glorify through you Islam. . . "[42] and in another passage he observes:

1. Do you wish for another witness in your favor beside the Book of God, O Sons of ʿAbbâs, [to testify] to your praise and glory?
2. Let it be enough that God has made over to you His command and that He has revealed, *auḥâ,* "Obey those in command!"[43]
3. Faith without love of you will not be accepted [as meritorious by God]— does God accept prayer without [previous] purification?[44]

Elsewhere he speaks of the Abbasids as "a lineage, love of which is part of the confession of the divine unity," *nisbatun ḥubbu-hâ min at-tauḥîd.*[45]

The religious character of the caliph with its resultant sultano-centrism of the ancient Near Eastern and Sassanian type, in the service of maintaining Muslim society, does not, of course, prevent active and even violent opposition to his commands or his person. The political tensions continued in all their destructiveness, only their danger for the community, which very gradually lost the urge to participate in the altercations of its rulers, was lessened when the *umma* made its supreme representative into the symbol of a unity which no longer needed to subsist in the realities of empire. The development was furthered by the cleavage between piety and power, which some of the most distinguished spokesmen of the community tended to dramatize by refusing to hold office in the state. The self-righteous egotism of religious purity, which preferred surrendering government to the sinners to risking contamination by involvement in unlawful actions, intensified the break between the actual political community, then in full decline, and the nascent cultural community of ideally unlimited territory and duration.

An incident typical of the strained relations between the ruler and the professionally pious occurred when al-Mahdî (775–85) received Sufyân ath-Thaurî (d. 777/8), who "came in and addressed him with the common salutation which one Muslim makes to another, and not with that to which he is entitled as caliph." During this interview, the vizier ar-Rabîʿ b. Yûnus (d. 786)

was standing behind the prince and leaning on his sword, ready to execute whatever orders he might receive. Al-Mahdî then turned with a smiling face towards Sufyân and said: "You are much mistaken in some of your ideas re-

specting me: you imagine that if I wished to do you ill, I could not execute my intention; but now, that you are in my power do you not fear that I may award you whatever punishment my caprice may dictate?"—"If you pass sentence on me," replied Sufyân, "a powerful sovereign who knoweth right from wrong will pass sentence on you.—Commander of the Faithful!" exclaimed ar-Rabîʿ, "shall this rude fellow be allowed to address you thus? Let me strike off his head."—"Nay, silence!" replied al-Mahdî, "he and the like of him would desire nothing better than to die by our hands, so as to make us wretched [in the next life] whilst they would enjoy eternal happiness: draw up an act nominating him *qâḍî* of Kúfa and forbidding any person to control his decisions." The paper was written out immediately and handed to Sufyân, who withdrew, but then flung it into the Tigris and took to flight.[46]

The idea of the destructiveness to salvation of wielding executive power was to become and remain a commonplace of popular ethics. The Persian mystic, Jalâl ad-Dîn Rûmî (d. 1273), says: "the names 'princehood,' *mîrî*, 'vizierate,' *wazîrî*, and 'kingship,' *shâhî*, are enticing, but hidden beneath them is death and pain and giving up the ghost. Be a slave of God and walk on the earth like a horse under the rider, and not like a bier which is carried on the necks of the bearers."[47] Writing in 1258, his contemporary, Saʿdî (d. 1291 or 1292), whose tomb near Shîrâz Ibn Baṭṭûṭa was to visit some forty years later,[48] makes the same point in this form: "One of the saints saw in a dream a king in Paradise and a holy man in Hell. He asked, 'What is the cause of this man's degradation and that man's exaltation? For men believed the contrary of this.' A voice came, 'The king is come to Paradise because he had a love for Dervishes, the holy man to Hell because he sought the favor of kings'. "[49]

It is not surprising that the official stress on religion as the structural principle of society should have been accompanied by a recrudescence of the feeling against the non-Muslim communities. Mutawakkil issued his oft-discussed edict regulating the status of Christians and Jews in 850,[50] and Jâḥiẓ devoted an epistle to winning over the lukewarm sections of public opinion to the support of the caliph's severity.[51] It is interesting to observe the intensity of Jâḥiẓ' irritation against the Christians as compared with his leniency toward Jews. And while it is true that, in this particular case, Jâhiz may reflect but the official line in a given situation, it must be noted that, in general, Christianity has remained more alien to Muslim thinking than has Judaism. It was not merely the potential backing by Christian powers which made the Christians in the *dâr al-Islâm* potential political suspects; but the fundamental

attitude of Christian theology, with its insistence on religious mystery, went against the grain of even the most independent Muslim divines. Characteristic in this context is Ghazzâlî's (d. 1111) verdict in his *Refutation of the Divinity of Jesus by the Gospel Itself*,[52] where he takes up a Christian objection: "To this we reply that to go against the clear data of reason and to place reliance on the irrational [or: the unintelligible, *amr ghair ma⁽qûl*] is stupidity and weakmindedness." Characteristic also is the never abating suspicion of Christian back-handedness, as when Jâḥiẓ believes the declaration of Christian doctors that camel carrion produced the worst of smells to be motivated by their hatred of the camel-riders (i.e., the Muslim Arabs).[53] Elsewhere Jâḥiẓ expresses his wonderment that it should have been the Byzantines who origi-nated castration, considering that the Christians more than any other group emphasized humaneness and clemency.[54] It is true Jâḥiẓ had been able and willing to bring together a number of poems in praise of them (as well as of Jews and Magians),[55] but the anti-Christian verses of Buḥturî[56] are more in line with the general outlook of the Muslim community. The time is not yet when an Ibn Jubair reacts to the sight of a Christian bridal pro-cession[57] with a prayer to be preserved from its seduction; when an Ibn Baṭṭûṭa (d. 1377; traveled 1325–49) is surprised at the good opinion held of him by the ex-emperor Andronicus the Second of Constantinople (abdicated 1328; d. 1332) as a man not of the prince's religious community;[58] or when the Aleppines send their animals to the Jewish cemetery and an abandoned synagogue where, scared by the fate of the unbelievers' souls, they get over attacks of retention of urine.[59] In Mutawakkil's days, there would still have obtained the possibility of an extension of the actual co-operation in administration and scholarship among the various religious communities into a common culture consciousness. The realization of such a community of culture can actually be dis-cerned in an occasional Christian writer.[60] But the realization could only be a reluctant one and would, in any case, have been powerless to counteract the trend toward political suppression and social segregation which marks the attitude toward the *dimmi* communities in the period after the Crusades.[61]

Unifying Muslim society entailed, almost of necessity, the de-sire to eliminate organized religious dissent. Not only when sectari-anism could be interpreted as a mask for "nationalism," as was the case with Hârijism in Iran[62] or among the Berbers, did the

government feel entitled to use force, but within Sunnite Islam itself major deviations were unbearable to the caliph. The *miḥna* of the Muʿtazilites was abolished by Mutawakkil (*ca.* 851), and the government employed its machinery to uphold orthodoxy against its theological critics as well as against the partisans of the house of ʿAlî, the Shîʿa.[63] Despite his rather objective attitude, on the intellectual level, toward non-Muslim forms of religions,[64] Maʾmûn continued the tradition of Manṣûr and Mahdî,[65] who had felt it to be their duty to uproot heresy in the empire.[66] Yet by his time the cultural implications of religious indifference, not to speak of Manichaean sympathies, were no longer significant. The short-lived vogue of "dualism" and "free-thinking" had barely concealed a measure of contempt with regard to the Arab tradition as such. But as the ninth century wore on Manichaeanism receded rapidly, and the doctrinal conflicts within Islam no longer pitted the orthodox against the Persianizers, but against their erstwhile saviors, the Hellenizing Muʿtazilites.

The hatred which persecution had provoked[67] facilitated Mutawakkil's efforts in behalf of orthodoxy. Intolerance in the service of what must have seemed the legitimate self-defense of the *umma* was destined to deepen;[68] even an Abû ʾl-ʿAlâʾ al-Maʿarrî (d. 1057) holds the wrath against heretics to be as meritorious as enduring the scorching sun at ʿArafa (during the pilgrimage).[69] In the tenth century the government in Baghdâd attempts to censor books;[70] almost simultaneously the *iḫtiyâr*, or free choice of the Koran readers to select from among the traditional systems of *variae lectiones*, ends by fiat of the authorities.[71] Yet, down to the twelfth century, governmental endeavors remained largely ineffective in the capital, although some of the potentates in non-Arab lands achieved a fair measure of advance toward creedal uniformity. The Shîʿa in Baghdâd maintained an influential position to the last days of the caliphate, and, in addition to sectarian disputes, controversies between the various Sunnite law schools neutralized the efforts of Muslim society to consolidate through enforced uniformity.[72]

While Islam never accepted the equality with Arabic of any other language in the manner that Christianity admitted the equivalence of at least Greek and Latin as media of theological expression, Muslim society gradually came to accept Persian as a second language of civilization (but not, indeed, as another "sacred" tongue). The period under consideration is precisely the

time during which Persian (in its modern form) developed and found acceptance as a vehicle of literary and scientific thought. But the overriding prestige of Arabic may well be put down as one of the most powerful factors in securing for the world of Islam intellectual as well as emotional cohesion. Only in the very beginning of their rule did the new overlords attempt to prevent their non-Muslim subjects from using the Arabic language;[73] actually Arabic soon became the strongest factor in drawing the non-Muslims into the cultural orbit of Islam.[74]

Arabic is the language of Paradise.[75] Al-Afshîn (d. 841), the great general of Muʿtaṣim, "bore envy towards Abû Dulaf al-ʿIjlî for his knowledge of the pure Arabic language";[76] the excellencies of the Arabic language are a favorite topic of learned disputation;[77] and as late an author as Ibn Isfandiyâr (wrote *ca.* 1216) is proud of the fact that the Bâwandî dynasts of Tabaristan had been praised by poets in the Arabic tongue.[78] Frowning, not without reason, on any translation of the Holy Book, the Arabic-speaking Muslim came to make his peace with the vitality and practical importance of other languages,[79] and he would greatly admire those able to express themselves well in "the two tongues," Arabic and Persian;[80] but he would not consider the multiplicity of languages available to mankind as a gift of grace on the part of the Lord, as certain Christian circles had done.[81] The supremacy of one (or two) culture languages and their maintenance in a "standardized" form were too important as a means toward an Islamic culture identification to be jeopardized by sympathetic encouragement of local idioms. No theologian could go beyond the accommodating statement which a writer of the eleventh century puts in the mouth of Ḥasan al-Baṣrî (d. 728), who is made to deny that the rank of a scholar will depend on his mastery of Arabic but this with the careful addition that, even though knowledge of the Law and the explication of the Koran (in whichever language) make the scholar, it is preferable for him to possess Arabic as well since the Koran was revealed in it and since it was the idiom used by the Prophet.[82] When Maḥmûd of Ghazna (997–1030) displaced Persian and restored Arabic as the language of official documents, his action appears to have met with public approval.[83]

Unilinear history from creation to judgment, with the rise of Islam as its end and climax, provided a means of gathering up the centrifugal traditions of the Muslim peoples. Where a cyclic theory of history and therewith of political power (as professed by the

Ismâ'îlîs but also by Kindî) might suggest the probability of a decline of Islam on the pattern of the decline of earlier powers of universal aspirations,[84] the unilinear arrangement of events would support the final character of the Muslim religion and of Muslim society; it would not, however, convey to the community a sense of the cultural continuity into which it had been placed by the conquests, leaving it thus without any feeling of obligation toward the civilizations which it superseded or disestablished. The realization of the oneness of history is not accompanied by a similar realization with regard to the sequence of cultures.[85] Sacred precedent would readily illuminate contemporary events—Abû Tammâm compares the victory over Bâbak with the victory of Badr.[86] Retrospection on the heroic age of the faith might lead to pessimism; thus Ma'mûn contrasts his own subjects discouragingly with those of the caliph 'Umar (634–44).[87] The concept of a history limited in time at both ends was to the Muslims themselves a distinctive feature of their manner of thinking which set them apart from their Hindu neighbors. 'Utbî (d. 1036 or 1040) tells how the defeated Indians

brought out of the idol temple an engraved stone, upon which they had fastened a writing to the effect that it was forty thousand years since that building was constructed. And the Sultan [that is, Maḥmûd of Ghazna] expressed surprise at this extreme error and folly for all the learned in rules, and skilled in guidance have agreed that the extent of the world's age is not more than seven thousand years, and in these times there is every indication of the [approaching] judgment, and evidences of the decay of the world. Histories are alleged for this, and the Koran's witnessing confirmation is to the discerning intellect an essential fact, and to the farseeing is a guide [to the truth]. In these matters we must be content with the eyes of the learned, of the explication of the wise, who all deny the assertion, and agree that the testimony of this stone is all a falsehood and untruth, and a mere invention of these bewildered liars.[88]

When confronted with a problematic situation of any kind, the Sunnite community has always inclined to that adjustment that would tend to guarantee its catholicity and its perpetuation independent of the peripeteias of the political development more narrowly defined. Therefore the *umma* has typically paid scant attention to the passing power configurations of the day. It turned domination by foreign if Islamized groups into a means of preserving the Islamic heritage rigidly intact by evolving a division of function in which the alien rulers, Turks for the most part, were confined to the services of the sword while the Arabic-speaking intelligentsia kept an unbreakable hold on the offices of the pen

and on the transmission of the essential lore of the community. Little did it matter that a sizable proportion of traditionists, canonists, and saints were of non-Arabic extraction. Their contribution not only would be made in the sacred tongue but would document that same rigid concentration on the timeless legal and religious concerns of the *umma* which had from the beginning made the strength of the (Arab-)Muslim tradition. It was, from the twelfth century on, as rare to find a jurisconsult who was at the same time a military or police official[89] as it was for a member of the Arab bourgeoisie to enter the ranks of the Turkish soldier-administrators.[90] These attitudes sometimes gave to the political atmosphere of the later Middle Ages a peculiarly abstract touch. Hatred of the Umayyads was still real for the Sharîf ar-Radî (d. 1016), who, in a poem, addresses the pious caliph ʿUmar II (717–720) in this wise:

O Ibn ʿAbdalʿazîz, were it possible for the eye to weep over any man of Umayya I should weep for you.[91]

Conversely, pro-Umayyad anecdotes were circulated in fifteenth-century Aleppo.[92]

Canon Law as well as public sentiment made no distinction between Muslims living within or without the *dâr al-Islâm*. Any Muslim resident or subject of a non-Muslim country entered, upon his arrival in a Muslim country, into the rights and duties of the local population. The non-Muslim foreigners who, after a stay of one year, had to pay poll tax, that is to assume the position of a *dimmî*, would acquire full citizenship by professing Islam. The legists graded the customs dues of imports according to the religious status of the trader—a Muslim paid two and one-half per cent, a *dimmî* five per cent, a non-Muslim foreigner ten per cent.[93]

Political decline stimulated culture consciousness. Even as among the Persians the loss of independence had resulted in awareness and pride of their cultural achievements, so did the Arabs when their power went down within Islam reflect on their own contribution to civilized life before and through Islam. Later, when the political effectiveness of the Muslim countries diminishes altogether, interest in the Muslim intellectual accomplishment—the term is to be taken in its widest possible sense—increases sharply, both to preserve self-respect and to provide a rationale for societal unity. This is not to say that the educated classes failed to perceive the decline in creativeness and sheer learning that marked the period

of the breakdown of the Abbasid caliphate and continued with but few reversals through the eighteenth century.[94] Nor is it to suggest that this appreciation of Islam as a civilization was confined to an intensified interest in the works of peace of the kind expressed by Ibn Jubair on his visit to Damascus: "These hospitals are among the great glories of Islam and so are the colleges."[95] The new attitude is best described as a feeling for the separateness of the political and intellectual spheres and the realization of their inherent independence of one another, although it will remain true that the deterioration of the rulers will impede the works of the mind.

In the introduction to his *Nishwâr al-Muḥâḍara*, a collection of stories and anecdotes, the judge Abû ʿAlî at-Tanûḫî (d. 994) has this to say:

I found the characters of our kings and magnates fall short of the standard of nobility reflected in those anecdotes [which the author had gathered from the mouths of people now dead who had reported to him on a fairly remote past] . . . , nay, more, those characters are the very contrary of the characters, habits, ways and manners of their predecessors, as indicated by their narratives; so much so that if any survivor among those old men tell a story of this type in the presence of the rulers and magnates of our time (particularly if it deal with munificence, good nature, high fortune, magnanimity, broad-mindedness, easy circumstances or high morality), they reject it as false, treat it as importune and brand it as extravagant, being unable themselves to realize the like. Some petty things whereto they have themselves attained is to their minds grand in comparison with the grandest thing mentioned in those tales; . . . And this is notwithstanding that among the men who do their duty as teachers, the scholars who undertake to instruct and to make wise, the proficients in every branch of learning or science, in earnest and in jest, and in the arts, there are such as are pre-eminent in genius, and in inner and outer grace, in skilful performance, and in masterly treatment, above many of their predecessors in time, who were born in that earlier age. Such persons, however, get from the magnates of our time mere honor without honorarium, and such favors only as involve no burdens nor running into debt.[96] . . . This is why noble deeds done under these [present] dynasties are obscured . . . ; for men of worth will not spend their days in eternizing other peoples' glories . . . when they are to have no profit or benefit themselves. . . . For all that in our time and that which immediately preceded it such secrets of science have been discovered, such subtleties of thought have been made known as might well have been too hard for or even inaccessible to, our predecessors in past ages.[97]

Thus, as a reaction to his historical experience and, so to speak, just in time to withstand the wave of political regionalism that swept the Muslim world upon the decline of Seljuq rule, the Muslim would come to recognize himself in a culture pattern that was perhaps most easily circumscribed in terms of the religious law,

but that would yield more fully to an analysis into specific concepts of *Bildung*, science,[98] and a distinctive way of life. Coherence and authority, the pattern would derive from tradition. Not only were the Abbasid rulers accepted because they were the heirs of the Prophet,[99] not only does everybody "have in the Messenger of God the most magnificent model, and the most exalted in Sunna and Book,"[100] but the *umma* as such derived its self-confidence and security from living in the Prophet's Tradition. As a system that could be maintained by rational means,[101] as the median and therefore best of faiths, the genuine, or orthodox, tradition of Islam is beyond suspicion or criticism, whereas uncritical acceptance of any other religious tradition must needs be condemned as blind.[102] The concept of Islam as the religion of the mean leads to "heresy" being (in part) defined as an "exaggeration," or "excess," *ghuluww*, of a tendency which is unbearable for the community, not by its nature, but only for its radicalism. When partisanship for the *'Alids* becomes "exaggerated" to the extent that supernatural powers are ascribed to them, the "exaggerators" leave the *umma* for having succumbed to "associationism," or polytheism, *shirk*. It is interesting to observe how readily the concept of *tawassuṭ*, the maintaining of the mean (in religion) could be developed into an educational concept.[103] The consciousness of a normative Islamic tradition would at times take a radically antihistorical turn, as when Ibn Kathîr (d. 1332) declares that there is no need to gather information on Jews and Christians seeing that God has caused their law to be superseded by the Muslim revelation.[104] But, on the whole, the conviction of the normative character of the Muslim tradition shows itself readily compatible with a sense of cultural continuity. Thus, Kindî states programmatically:

We should not be ashamed to acknowledge truth and to assimilate it from whatever source it comes to us, even if it is brought to us by former generations and foreign peoples. . . . My principle is first to record in complete quotations all that the Ancients have said on the subject, secondly, to complete what the Ancients have not fully expressed, and this according to the usage of our Arabic language, the customs of our age and our own ability.[105]

In contrast to Egypt, Babylonia, or China, there developed in Islam not one but two scribal classes—the *fuqahâ'*, or canon lawyers, and the *kuttâb*, or "secretaries."[106] It was the *kâtib* who emerged as the typical bearer of the characteristic Muslim polite education, the *adab*. In *adab*,

the information selected is arranged around belles-lettres (themselves frequently and confusingly referred to as *adab*), which are understood to include history. Further branches of knowledge are admitted as they prove necessary or serviceable to round off the mental range of the polite speaker or writer. The insistence on the correctness and facility of expression accounts for the importance of grammar. There is a distinct "high society" flavor about *adab*. Philosophy and its most recondite problems, arithmetic, law—nothing is excluded from enriching *adab*. But in the hands of the *adīb*, the representative of this type of education, the forbidding rigor of scientific debate gives way to pleasing converse, and depth is replaced by charm. European and particularly French society in the eighteenth century displays an attitude to learning not too dissimilar to that of the brilliant *udabā'* of Baghdad. In both milieux, wit and grace, and specifically literary wit and verbal grace, are sought after, and elegance, *zarf*, rates as the highest attainment.

Adab, the general knowledge of everything, completes *ʿilm*, the thorough possession of one area of information. But it leaves the basic structure of the Muslim's spiritual life untouched. It does not affect his religious standing. The *adīb* may be pious or impious, depending on his inclination. *Adab* as such is neutral. *Adab* does not require the taking of a stand on current questions or permanent problems. It is, in a sense, an outlook, a frame within which to integrate one's world.[107]

It fosters a tendency to make literature of any science, to cover up the harshness of facts with euphemisms,[108] and to lessen the need for self-commitment by ritualizing life to a surprising extent.[109] *Adab* allows the blending of intellectual elements of any provenience; and so it is in *adab* that the actual integration of diverse traditions will first take place.[110] Abû Tammâm praises the littérateur, al-Hasan b. Wahb, by likening his discourse, *kalâm*, to that of the famous Arabic orator, Quss b. Sâʿida (a half-legendary figure, probably a Christian, of the time of the Ignorance), the poetess, Lailà al-Aḥyaliyya (d. 707), the erotic poet, Kuthayyir ʿAzza (d. 723) and the style of Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, the protagonist of the Iranian tradition in the eighth century, in his *Yatîma*.[111] Jâḥiẓ describes his *Kitâb al-ḥayawân* as taken from Arabs and non-Arabs; it is both genuinely Arab, *ʿarabî aʿrâbî*, and comprehensively (or: synthetically) Islamic, *islâmî jamâʿî*.[112]

With all this, it is the way of life which remains the supreme characteristic of the Muslim. The otherness of the people of Khwârizm in speech and food and dress is satirized rather bitterly.[113] When the Muslim inhabitants of the island of al-Matîra eat birds without first cutting their throats and invoking the name of God, the widely traveled Ibn Battûta loses his wish to visit their town; by their action they have put themselves outside the pale; a true

cultural border has been reached.[114] A similar sentiment may be detected where Yâqût (d. 1229) reports on the northern Turks.[115] This attitude does not, however, exclude the idealization of a backward and culturally deviant group as long as its mode of existence can be understood as a realization of the genuine Prophetic tradition.[116]

The outside world, too, began to see the *dâr al-Islâm* as a unity describable in cultural terms. When Nikephoros Phokas conquered Tarsus in 965, he had two signs (or: flags) raised outside the walls, one as the emblem of the country of the Rhomaeans, the other as the emblem of the land of the Muslims. Then his herald cried out that he who wanted justice and equity, security for himself, his family, and his possessions, safety of roads, just laws, benevolent treatment and chastity, should rally to the sign of the emperor; but that he who wanted fornication and sodomy, oppressive laws, extortion and expropriation of property, should place himself under the Muslim banner.[117] Through the screen of political propaganda one senses the awareness for the essential otherness of the enemy's way of life, an awareness which is matched *mutatis mutandis* on the Muslim side. It is, in fact, the very specific feeling of the culture-conscious Muslim for the style of Islamic life,[118] for what is and what is not compatible with his manner of thinking and, even more so, of living which enabled Bêrûnî (d. 1048), a scholar unrivaled in Islamic science, to develop and apply in his book on India[119] that descriptive attitude toward another civilization which on the whole has been a distinctive trait of the West.[120]

The development in Islam of an identification which is analyzable into political, religious, and cultural constituents is paralleled by the identification in Byzantium of the Rhomaios. Not every subject of the Byzantine emperor can lay claim to this designation but only he who through his affiliation with orthodoxy is integrated in the sole cultural community that counts.[121] The requirements of orthodoxy and "Hellenization" correspond closely to those of adherence to Islam and that measure of "Arabization" which it entails.[122] The analogy that obtains between the Rhomaios and the Arab-Muslim citizen of the caliphate illustrates once again the profound kinship of those two cultural communities whose rivalry dominates the history of the Near East during the better part of the Middle Ages.

NOTES

1. Well described by W. M. Watt, *Muḥammad at Mecca* (Oxford, 1953), esp. pp. 72–79.

2. From British Museum Codex Orientalis (hereafter Cod. Mus. Br. Or.) 3138, quoted by J. M. Marquart, *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge* (Leipzig, 1903), pp. 91–92; cf. U. Pestalozza, "Il Manicheismo presso i Turchi occidentali ed orientali," *R. Istituto Lombardo di scienze e lettere. Rendiconti*, Serie II, vol. LXVII (1934), pp. 464–65.

3. Greatgrandson of Jarîr, a Baṣrian by birth, flourished during the reigns of Wâthiq (842–47) and Mutawakkil (847–61); cf. Abû 'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahânî, *Kitâb al-aghânî* XX (Bûlâq, 1285), 183–88, and C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (hereafter *GAL*), Supplement I (Leiden, 1937–42), 122.

4. Aḥmad b. abî Ṭâhir Ṭaifûr, *Kitâb Baghdâd*, ed. trans. H. Keller (Leipzig, 1908), p. 318[11] (trans., p. 144).

5. *Kitâb al-buḫalâ*, ed. G. Van Vloten (Leiden, 1900), p. 187[10p]; trans. C. Pellat (Beirut and Paris, 1951), p. 250.

6. *Li-kathrat udabâ'i-hâ wa-fuḍalâ'i-hâ;* Yâqût, *Mu'jam al-buldân*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Petersburg and Leipzig, 1866–73), I, 628[22]; cf. also Barbier de Meynard, *Dictionnaire géographique, historique et littéraire de la Perse* (Paris, 1861), p. 106.

7. *Muqaṣṣirîn;* cf. E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London and Edinburgh, 1863–93), p. 2355a.

8. *Ṭâ'if/zâmil;* cf. *ibid.*, p. 1252c bottom.

9. *Dîwân*, ed. Ḫalîl Mardam Bek (Damascus, 1369/1949), pp. 256–57.

10. *Buḫalâ*, pp. 191[18]–92[1] (trans., p. 256).

11. The Arab attitude is expressed by Jâḥiẓ, *Kitâb al-ḥayawân* (2d ed.; Cairo, 1357–64/1938–45), IV, 383[3]: "except for closeness to God, *wilâyat Allâh*, I do not know on earth a greater blessing than that a man be praised, *mamdûḥan*." Correspondingly, one should try to avoid being satirized; cf. *ibid.*, V, 294–95.

12. *Dîwân*, ed. Ibr. al-Aswad (Beirut, 1347/1928), p. 44[2b].

13. *Risâlat aṣ-ṣaḥâba*, in *Rasâ'il al-bulaghâ*, ed. Muḥ. Kurd 'Alî (3d ed.; Cairo, 1946), pp. 126–27.

14. Cf. J. Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford, 1950), pp. 95–96.[1]

15. The *shu'ûbî* movement has been studied by I. Goldziher in two classical essays that are included in his *Muhammedanische Studien* (Halle a/S., 1888–90), I, 147–216; cf. also K. Inostrancev, *Iranian Influences on Moslem Literature*, trans. C. K. Nariman (Bombay, 1918), I, and, most recently, the important work of C. Pellat, *Le Milieu baṣrien et la formation de Ğâḥiẓ* (Paris, 1953). It is not here intended to repeat the findings of those authors but merely to substantiate some observations on how the disintegrative tendencies were met by recourse to religion. It is highly informative to study Iranian intellectual resistance to the Arabic-Muslim conquerors in the light of the intellectual resistance offered Rome by her subject peoples. On this subject, cf. H. Fuchs, *Der geistige Widerstand gegen Rom in der antiken Welt* (Berlin, 1938).

16. As it happened in 783; cf. Ibn Isfandiyâr, *History of Tabaristan*, abridged trans. E. G. Browne (Leiden and London, 1905), p. 126; cf. also B. Spuler, *Iran in früh-islamischer Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1952), p. 378.

17. The story is told, e.g., by Yâqût, *op. cit.*, I, 426[4–10].

18. *Ḥayawân*, VII, 109–10.

19. *Ibid.*, I, 286.

20. *Buḫalâ*, p. 79 (trans., p. 108); cf. here also the passage, pp. 155[18]–56[1] (trans., p. 205), for the peculiar relationship in Baṣra between Arabs and *mawâlî*. 'Auf's attitude is in a sense paralleled by the caliph 'Umar's (634–44) alleged aversion against the use of the *dastward* or Persian napkin; cf. Ibn Qutaiba (d. 889), *'Uyûn al-aḫbâr* (Cairo, 1925–30), III, 214.

21. Cf. in this context the remarks of R. Blachère, *Histoire de la littérature arabe*
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[1] See note (iii) of appendix.

(Paris, 1952), I, 181. The need felt by the Arabs to offset the cultural superiority of the Persians is well illustrated by the story of Ziyád b. abíhi (d. 672) told by Baihaqí (*fl. ca.* 900), *Kitáb al-maḥásin wa'l-masáwí*, ed. F. Schwally (Giessen, 1902), p. 299; cf. also Pellat, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

22. *Díwán*, p. 101³⁻⁴.

23. A leader of the Banú ʿAbs at the time of the War of Dáḥis, one of the great events of pre-Islamic Arabian history (late sixth century).

24. *Díwán*, p. 421⁷ (where al-Aswad writes erroneously: Maḍّáḍ); al-Ḥárith was one of the legendary Jurhumite rulers of Mecca, to whom tradition ascribes the restoration of the Kaʿba when it had been damaged by a torrential rain; cf. A. P. Caussin de Perceval, *Essai sur l'histoire des Arabes avant l'islamisme* (Paris, 1847–48), I, 195 and 199 (but disregard the dates suggested by the author).

25. *Díwán*, pp. 207⁴ and 208²; cf. also the "archeological" poem on the ruins of al-Ḥawarnaq by ʿAlí b. Muḥammad al-ʿAlawí al-Kúfí al-Ḥimmání (middle of 3d/9th century) *apud* Yáqút, *op. cit.*, II, 493–94; on the author, cf. Marzubání, *al-Muwashshaḥ* (Cairo, 1343), p. 346, and J. Fück, *Arabíya, Untersuchungen zur arabischen Sprach- und Stilgeschichte, Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl.*, XLV/1 (1950), 76–77.

26. *Kitáb Baghdád*, pp. 143–44 (trans., pp. 65–66).

27. *Buḫaláʾ*, pp. 194–95 (trans., p. 259).

28. *Kitáb al-imtáʿ waʾl-muʾánasa* (Cairo, 1939–44), I, 70–96; cf. also the discussion by the Iḫwán aṣ-Ṣafá of national types in *Thier und Mensch vor dem König der Genien*, ed. F. Dieterici (2d ed.; Leipzig, 1881), pp. 59–68; trans. Dieterici (Berlin, 1858) as *Der Streit zwischen Mensch und Thier*, pp. 97–113.

29. M. J. de Goeje (ed.), *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum* (hereafter *BGA*), V (Leiden, 1885), 317. In an anonymous Arabic fragment in praise of Fárs, which sounds as if it were composed during the eighth century, the poet voices his pride that Fárs never did belong to an Arab tribe. In the second of the three lines which Yáqút, *op. cit.*, III, 838⁵⁻⁷, quotes, the author speaks of Fárs as a country that "does not belong to Jarm nor to serfs from Yaman, but which is home to the sons of the free, *lákinna-há li-banî 'l-aḥrári auṭánu.*"

30. Yáqút, *op. cit.*, II, 16⁴. On the other hand, there is a tradition (not caught up in Carra de Vaux' article "*Dadjdjál*," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* [Leiden, 1913–34], I, 886–87) that has the Dajjál, or "Antichrist," speak Persian and carry a Persian shield; cf. Mujîr ad-Dîn al-Ḥanbalî, *al-Uns al-jalíl bi-taʾríḫ al-Quds waʾl-Ḫalíl* (Cairo, 1283), p. 207¹⁵.

31. *Kitáb Baghdád*, pp. 157–58 (trans., p. 71).

32. Ibn Isfandiyár, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

33. South Arabian castle, here symbolizing the anti-Umayyad Arabian tribes of the Qaḥṭán group.

34. Yáqút, *op. cit.*, II, 413¹¹⁻¹², has al-Jurjání; this *nisba* to be amended in accordance with *ibid.*, II, 55⁵⁻⁶, where a ʿIṣábat al-Jarjaráʾí is mentioned whose *ism* was Ibráhîm b. Bádám; he composed *ḥikáyát, aḫbár*, and a *díwán shiʿr*, and ʿAun b. Muḥammad al-Kindí acted as his *ráwí*: this ʿAun is referred to by ʿArîb, *Tabari continuatus*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1897), p. 153, as telling Ṣúlî (d. 947) of an incident that occurred in the later days of Samarra; al-Ḫaṭîb al-Baghdádî, *Taʾríḫ Baghdád* (Cairo, 1931), XI, 294 (no. 6739), speaks of him as an *aḫbárî, ṣáḥib ḥikáyát wa-ádáb*, without, however, offering any biographical dates.

35. Ṭabarî, *Annales*, ed. M. J. de Goeje *et al.* (Leiden, 1879–1901), II, 1291⁵⁻¹⁰, quoted by Spuler, *op. cit.*, p. 146, n. 10, and, before him, by J. Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom and Its Fall* (Calcutta, 1927), p. 496, n. 1. Cf. the verse of al-ʿAbdî describing the parties of the civil war in these terms: "As to the summoners to Paradise, they are Háshimí; but the Banú Umayya are of those who summon to the Fire."

36. Cf., e.g., Ibn Qutaiba, *'Uyūn*, I, 5⁴; trans. J. Horovitz, *Islamic Culture*, IV (1930), 188: "Government, *sulṭān*, and religion are two brothers; the one of them cannot subsist without the other." The statement is amplified, *ibid.*, I, 13⁹⁻¹¹ (trans., p. 197), as a saying of Ardashīr, the founder of the Sassanian dynasty (ruled A.D. 226–42), to his son: "For religion is the basis and kingdom, *mulk*, the guard; that which has no basis falls to pieces, that which is not guarded, perishes." Ibn al-Muʿtazz, caliph for one day (d. 908), restates the thought in this form: "Kingship, *mulk*, lasts through religion, *dīn*; and religion receives strength from kingship." Cf. Ibn al-Muʿtazz, *Rasāʾil*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbdalmunʿim Khafājī (Cairo, 1365/1946), p. 68. Bērūnī (d. 1048) formulates the idea with a view to underlining the Arabic character of both: "Our religion and the empire are Arabic and they are twins, *dīnu-nā wa'd-daula ʿarabiyyāni wa-tauʾamāni*." Cf. M. Meyerhof. "Das Vorwort zur Drogenkunde des Bērūnī," *Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften und der Medizin*, III (Berlin, 1932), pp. 12¹⁶ and 39 of reprint. For further references, cf. G. E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam. A Study in Cultural Orientation* (2d ed.; Chicago, 1953), p. 353.

37. Ṭabarī, *op. cit.*, III, 1117; trans. W. M. Patton, *Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal and the Miḥna* (Leiden, 1897), pp. 65–66; the text also in *Kitāb Baghdād*, pp. 344–45 (trans., p. 156). Maʾmūn's sense of what is essential in Islam is shown, *ibid.*, pp. 60–61 (trans., p. 28); the anecdote recurs in *'Uyūn*, II, 154–55, and Ibn ʿAbdrabbihi, *al-ʿIqd al-farīd* (Cairo, 1321), I, 207–8; note also in *Kitāb Baghdād*, p. 86 (trans., p. 39), Maʾmūn's interesting sociological observation that *irjāʾ*, or "neutralism," is the religion of the leaders, *mulūk*.

38. Cf. G. Wiet, *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale*, I, i (1953), 69.

39. *Dīwān*, p. 262⁷ᵃ.

40. *Ḥayawān*, III, 634. Abū 'l-ʿAtāhiya (d. 828) congratulates al-Amīn (809–13) on his accession to the throne with a poem which begins: "O son of the Prophet's paternal uncle, best of created beings, you are a mercy to the herd [of your subjects], *raḥmat ar-raʿiyya*"; cf. Abū 'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, Vol. XXI, R. E. Brünnow (Leiden, 1888), p. 17⁷.

41. *Dīwān*, pp. 78⁹⁻79¹.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 36⁴.

43. Koran 4:62.

44. *Dīwān*, p. 148¹⁻².

45. *Ibid.*, p. 346ᵇ.¹

46. Ibn Ḥallikān. *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, trans. W. MacG. de Slane (Paris, 1843–71), I, 577–78; Ibn Ḥallikān (d. 1282) quotes Masʿūdī (d. 956), *Murūj aḏ-ḏahab*, ed. Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille (Paris, 1861–79), VI, 257–58; cf. also the story of Mahdī and the *qāḍī* Sharīk (d. 794) in Ibn Ḥallikān, *op. cit.*, I, 623.

47. *Mathnawī*, ed. trans. R. A. Nicholson (Leiden and London, 1925–40), Bk. VI, 323–24 (= vol. V, 289 [trans., vol. VI, 275]); the passage is quoted by D. M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London, 1953), p. 230.

48. *Travels*, ed. C. Defrémery and B. R. Sanguinetti (Paris, 1853–58), II, 87.

49. *Gulistān*, II, 16; trans. A. J. Arberry, *Kings and Beggars. The First Two Chapters of Saʿdī's Gulistān* (London, 1945), pp. 81–82. It must be said, however, that on its part the state tended to degrade religion into a mere tool. Other than in the West and in the Byzantine Empire, religion failed to ethicize the *siyāsa*, the political conduct of the Muslim caliphs; and it cannot be judged to have constituted a moral brake on despotism. A similar view has been expressed by H. H. Schaeder, "Imperium und Kalifat," *Corona*, VII (1937), 548.

50. Recent re-translation from Ṭabarī, *op. cit.*, III, 1390–94, by E. Herzfeld, *Geschichte der Stadt Samarra* (Hamburg, 1948), pp. 190–92. In our context the order of the caliph to exclude the non-Muslims from sharing in the education of the Mus-

¹ See note (iv) of appendix.

lims is especially important; cf. Ṭabarí, *op. cit.*, III, 1390[7–8]: "and he forbade that their children study in the schools of the Muslims or that a Muslim teach them [privately]."

51. J. Finkel (ed.), *Three Essays of Jâḥiẓ* (Cairo, 1926), pp. 10–38; partial trans. by the same, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, XLVII (1927), 322–34.

52. *Ar-Radd al-jamîl li-ilâhiyyat ʿÎsâ bi-ṣariḥ al-Injîl*, ed. trans. R. Chidiac, S.J., under the title *Réfutation excellente de la divinité de Jésus-Christ d'après les Évangiles* (Paris, 1939), p. *8; see also Introduction, pp. 53 ff. (the edition is missing in *GAL*, Supplement, I, 747, no. 22, as well as in the Appendix to the volume).

53. *Ḥayawân*, I, 246.

54. *Ibid.*, I, 124.

55. *Ibid.*, V, 157–61.

56. *Dîwân* (Constantinople, 1329/1911), II, 63; quoted in part by Yâqût, *op. cit.*, II, 830[4–6]; also *Dîwân*, II, 264.

57. Which he viewed in Tyre, in September, 1184; cf. *Travels*, ed. W. Wright and M. J. de Goeje (2d ed.; Leiden and London, 1907); trans. R. J. C. Broadhurst (London, 1952), pp. 320–21.

58. *Travels*, II, 442; for reasons not yet explained, Ibn Baṭṭûṭa refers to the retired emperor as "George"; cf. H. A. R. Gibb, *Ibn Baṭṭûṭa. Travels in Asia and Africa 1325–54* (London, 1929), p. 358.

59. Sibṭ b. al-ʿAjami (d. 1479), *Kunûz aḏ-ḏahab fî taʾrîḫ Ḥalab*, trans. J. Sauvaget, *Matériaux pour servir à l'histoire de la ville d'Alep* (Beirut, 1933–50), II, 1–2.

60. Cf. Barhebraeus (d. 1286), *Chronographia*, ed. trans. Sir E. A. W. Budge (London, 1932), I, 92; and a century before him, Michael Syrus, Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, 1166–99, *Chronicle*, XI, 4. The passage in question reads in the translation by G. Bardy, *La Question des langues dans l'église ancienne*, I (Paris, 1948), p. 31: "Le Dieu des vengeances, voyant la méchanceté des Romains qui, partout où ils dominaient, pillaient cruellement nos églises et nos monastères et nous condamnaient sans pitié, amena du Sud les fils d'Ismaël pour nous délivrer par eux . . . . Ce ne fut pas un léger avantage pour nous d'être délivrés de la cruauté des Romains, de leur méchanceté, de leur colère, de leur cruelle jalousie et de nous trouver en repos."

61. Cf. E. Strauss, "The Social Isolation of *ahl adh-dhimma*," *P. Hirschler Memorial Book* (Budapest, 1949), pp. 73–94, and M. Perlmann, "Notes on Anti-Christian Propaganda in the Mamlûk Empire," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, X (1940–42), 843–61. The *ḏimmî* monopoly on the medical profession remained intact. Cf. Ibn al-Uḫuwwa, the Egyptian *muḥtasib* (d. 1329), *Maʿâlim al-qurba*, ed. with summary trans. R. Levy (London, 1938), p. 204 (trans., pp. 56–57), and Jâḥiẓ, *Buḫalâ*, pp. 109–10 (trans., pp. 147–48); Ibn Baṭṭûṭa, *op. cit.*, II, 305–6, is indignant when the Jewish physician in the *majlis* of Muḥammad b. Aydın, Sultan of Birgi, from 1307 when he conquered the town, to his death in 1344, seats himself above the Koran readers. On Muḥammad b. Aydın, cf. P. Wittek, *Das Fürstentum Mentesche, Studie zur Geschichte Westkleinasiens im 13.–15. Jahrhundert* (Istanbul, 1934), p. 37.

62. For the situation in Iran, cf., e.g., Spuler, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

63. On the importance of the Shîʿa under the early Abbasids, cf. L. Massignon, *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft* (hereafter *ZDMG*), XCII (1938), 378–82.

64. Cf. *Kitâb Baghdâd*, pp. 28–29 (trans., p. 13): his insistence on the fair conduct of religious discussions.

65. Cf. G. Vajda, *Rivista degli Studi Orientali*, XVII (1937/38), 173–229; cf. also *Ḥayawân*, IV, 443–60, the collection of poetical attacks on the *zindîq*; and *ibid.*, III, 366, the list of terms which the *zanâdiqa* were fond of using.

66. Cf. *Kitâb Baghdâd*, p. 91[3–4] (trans., p. 42), where he says that he aspires to

revive any good *sunna* and to do away with heretical innovation: . . . *wa-an yaj'ala himmata-hu fî . . . sunnatin ṣâliḥatin yuḥyi-hâ au bid'a yumîtu-hâ.*

67. Cf., e.g., ʿAlî b. al-Jahm, *Dîwân*, frag. 30 (pp. 125–26) and 35 (pp. 128–29).

68. B. Lewis, *Studia Islamica*, I (1953), 43–63, studies the different types of dissent with which the Muslims are prepared to reckon. Most important in our context is his analysis of the *zindîq*, "the criminal dissident" of the Islamic lawyers (pp. 55–56). In its further development Islam has tended to make the distinction between *mu'min* and *kâfir*, believer and unbeliever, a legal rather than a theological question. The "sectarian" will be considered to remain within the *umma* as long as he conforms to certain basic practices of the faith.

69. *Risâlat al-ghufrân*, ed. Bint ash-Shâṭi' (Cairo, 1950), pp. 361–62; on p. 362, Maʿarrî notes that every *milla* has its *mulḥidûn*.

70. Cf. Miskawaih, *apud* ʿArîb, *op. cit.*, p. 96; quoted by R. Levy, *A Baghdad Chronicle* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 146.

71. In A.D. 934; cf. A. Jeffery, *The Qur'ân as Scripture* (New York, 1952), pp. 98–100.

72. Cf., e.g., Yâqût, *op. cit.*, II, 893–94, on his own experiences with the three-pronged combats in Rayy between Shîʿites and Sunnites of the Ḥanafî and Shâfiʿî schools. W. Barthold, *Mussulman Culture* (Calcutta, 1934), p. 102, suggests that in Rayy as well as Iṣfahân these fights reflect the tension between the rural population, whose majority was Shîʿa, and the townspeople, who were mostly Sunnite. On the situation obtaining in Rayy *ca.* A.D. 985, cf. also A. Mazahéri, *La Vie quotidienne des musulmans au moyen âge (X^e–XIIIe siècle)* (Paris, 1951), p. 105.

73. Cf. B. Spuler, *Geschichte der islamischen Länder. I. Die Chalifenzeit* (Leiden, 1952), p. 30. For another attempt to prevent a national group from learning a language of cultural and practical importance, the rulings of the Rabbis against the study of Greek should be remembered; cf. G. Bardy, *op. cit.*, p. 16 (where the author speaks of the period from the first through the third centuries A.D.).[1]

74. On the process of Arabization, cf. N. Polyak, "L'arabisation de l'orient sémitique," *Revue des Études Islamiques*, XII (1938), 35–63, and, for the Berbers, W. Marçais, "Comment l'Afrique du Nord a été arabisée," *Annales de l'Institut d'études orientales, Université d'Alger*, IV (1938), 1–22.

75. Cf., for the phrase, Suyûṭî, *al-Muzhir fî 'ulûm al-lugha* (Cairo, 1282), I, 162. Of Syriac-speaking background but writing in Greek, John Malalas (*ca.* 491–578), *Chronographia*, ed. L. Dindorf (Bonn, 1831), I, 12 (on p. 12)—reissued in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, XCVII (Paris, 1865), cols. 76–77—explains that under the name of Hebrew, Syriac had been the language of the earthly Paradise. It is interesting that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries some extremists among the writers who fought for the admission on equal terms of German with Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, designated German as the language of Paradise; cf. L. Weisgerber, *Die geschichtliche Kraft der deutschen Sprache* (Düsseldorf, 1950), pp. 139 and 150–51.

76. Ibn Ḥallikân, *op. cit.*, I, 63.

77. Cf. the anecdote involving al-Kindî (d. 873) and the grammarian Thaʿlab (d. 904), told by F. Rosenthal, *Orientalia*, n.s., XV (1942), 273. Jâḥiz, *Buḥalâ'*, p. 212^{3–15} (trans., p. 282), argues that the absence in their language of a word for "generosity" proves that the Byzantines are the most miserly of nations; he goes on to refute the allegation that the dishonesty of the Persians is evidenced by their lacking a word to render the Arabic *naṣîḥa*, "good or sincere advice," by pointing out that they possess a number of words covering the several ingredients of the concept. Toward the end of his life Bêrûnî emphasizes the superiority of Arabic in regard to scientific expression; Persian he considers suitable for telling "the stories of the Khosroes," *al-akhbâr al-kisrawiyya*—presumably an allusion to Firdausî's *Shâh-Nâmah* (completed *ca.* 1010)—and for nightly conversations. He goes so far

[1] See note (v) of appendix.

as to exclaim: "I prefer to be reviled in Arabic to being praised in Persian." Cf. Meyerhof, *op. cit.*, 13[7-10] and 40–41 of reprint.

78. *Op. cit.*, pp. 64–65.

79. Cf., e.g., Ṣûlî (d. 947), *Aḫbâr ar-Râḍî wa'l-Muttaqî*, trans. M. Canard (Algiers, 1946–50), II, 109, on the position of Persian in the Baghdâd of his time. Yet Arabs would be fond of Persian poetry as were those noble Iṣfahânîs of pure Arab blood who in the ditty quoted by ar-Râghib al-Iṣfahânî (d. 1108) ask the *ghulâm* to sing to them in Persian. The lines are cited from the *Muḥâḍarât al-udabâʾ* (Cairo, 1326), I, 342, by M. Minovi, "Yakê az Fârsiyyât-i Abû Nuvâs," *Majalla-yi Dânish-kada-yi Adabiyyât* (Teheran), 1954, pp. 15–16 of the *tirage-à-part*.[1]

80. Cf. Ibn Jubair, *op. cit.*, pp. 199–200; trans. Broadhurst, pp. 208–9, on the bilingual sermon of Ṣadr ad-Dîn in Medina. Turkestan in the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries had three culture languages; W. Barthold, *op. cit.*, p. 124, refers to the shaikh Ḥusâm ad-Dîn ʿĀṣimî (*fl.* 1273/74, according to the same author, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, IV, 915*b*), who is praised by a younger contemporary for having produced excellent work "in all the three languages"; "his Arabic verses were marked by eloquence, *faṣîḥa*, the Persian verses by wit, *malîḥa*, and the Turkish verses by truthfulness, *ṣaḥîḥa*."

81. Cf. L. Weisgerber, *Von den Kräften der deutschen Sprache* (Düsseldorf, 1950), I, 37, on the views of the Syrian abbot, Jacob of Sarûj (d. as Bishop of Baṭnâ, A.D. 522); for further information on Jacob, cf. A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922), pp. 148–58.

82. Niẓâm al-mulk (?), *Siyâsat-Nâmah*, ed. trans. C. Schefer (Paris, 1891–93), p. 55[19-24] (trans., p. 84).

83. Cf. ʿUtbî, *The Kitab-i-Yamini* [*Kitâb-i Yamînî*], trans. from the Persian version by J. Reynolds (London, 1858), pp. 406–7. It is only from the second half of the twelfth century onward that Persian comes prominently (but by no means exclusively) to the fore as the language of official documents. In the chancellery of the Rûm Seljuq, Arabic was replaced by Persian as late as A.D. 1259 (cf. H. R. Roemer, *Staatsschreiben der Timuridenzeit* [Wiesbaden, 1952], pp. 11, 13). On the other hand, it has long been recognized that the Arabic of the *kâtib* owes a great deal to the form tradition of his Sassanian predecessors.[2]

84. Cf. F. Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden, 1952), pp. 78–79.

85. Cf., in this context, H. H. Schaeder, "Der Orient in der Zeitenwende," *Corona*, VII (1937), 277–304, esp. pp. 302–3.

86. *Dîwân*, p. 314[1-2]. The successful battle of Badr, A.D. 624, was Muḥammad's first significant triumph in his fight against the pagans of Mecca.

87. *Kitâb Baghdâd*, pp. 74–75 (trans., p. 34).

88. ʿUtbî, *op. cit.*, pp. 392–93. For a further discussion of the Muslim concept of history see below, pp. 173–75.

89. Sauvaget, *Matériaux*, I, 66 and 66, n. 3, quoting from Ibn ash-Shiḥna (d. 1485), *Ad-Durr al-muntaḫab fî ta'rîḫ mamlakat Ḥalab* (cf. also *GAL*, Supplement, I, 568), provides an instance in the person of Ḍiyâʾ ad-Dîn ʿĪsà b. Muḥammad al-Hakkârî (d. 1189), who began his career as a canon lawyer and *imâm* to become chief of police in Aleppo and an *amîr* in Egypt.[3]

90. The *madrasa Ṭaghrî-Wirmishiyya* in Aleppo was founded by Ṭaghrî-Wirmish, governor of the town, in 1436/37. This Ṭaghrî-Wirmish was the son of a merchant of Bahasnâ (to follow the writing of Yâqût, *op. cit.*, I, 770; a locality between Marʿash and Sumaisât), and his name had originally been Ḥusain; cf. Sauvaget, *op. cit.*, I, 172–73.[4]

91. *Dîwân* (Bombay, 1306/1888), p. 98[21]; quoted by Yâqût, *op. cit.*, II, 671[18].

92. Cf. Sauvaget, *op. cit.*, II, 19.

93. Cf. W. Heffening, *Das islamische Fremdenrecht bis zu den islamisch-frän-kischen Staatsverträgen* (Hanover, 1925), esp. pp. 32–34, 56, 108; in practice the duties levied depended solely on the nature of the goods to be imported.

94. Cf., e.g., the compliment paid to Ṣūlī and recorded by him, *op. cit.*, I, 156, and, later, the experience of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *op. cit.*, II, 11, when he hears in Baṣra, erstwhile the birthplace of grammatical studies, a *ḥuṭba* full of solecisms.

95. *Op. cit.*, p. 284³⁻⁴ (trans., p. 296).

96. Cf., however, the earlier Ibn Qutaiba (d. 889), *'Uyūn*, I, *ṭ-y;* trans. Horovitz, *Islamic Culture*, IV, 173: "When I had become aware . . . of the disappearance of learning, Government being too busy to set up a market for *Adab*, so that it became effaced and erased, I took it upon myself to compose a book of knowledge. . . ."

97. *The Table Talk of a Mesopotamian Judge*, ed. trans. D. S. Margoliouth (London, 1921–22), pp. 6–8 (trans., pp. 5–8); for the rising interest in the golden age of Baghdād in cultural phenomena, cf. the observation of F. Meinecke, *Die Entstehung des Historismus* (Munich and Berlin, 1936), I, 43: (in the course of a discussion of Leibniz Meinecke says) "Alle spätere Kultur- und Zivilisationsgeschichtschreibung mit ihrer bewussten Zurückdrängung der staatlich-militärischen Geschehnisse wurzelt in dem Selbstbewusstsein des sich emanzipierenden Bürgertums."

98. On which cf. "Muslim World View and Muslim Science," below, pp. 111–26.

99. E.g., Marwān b. abī Ḥafṣa (d. 797), addressing Mahdī, with reference to Koran 8:76, *Aghānī*, IX, 44²⁴ (= *Aghānī*, 3d ed., X, 87); and 'Alī b. al-Jahm, *Dīwān*, p. 11⁸⁻⁹ (again with reference to the same koranic passage in l. 8).

100. As Abū Tammām, *Dīwān*, p. 82⁸, expresses himself before invoking for the benefit of a patron the precedent of the Prophet's behavior to those Meccans whose loyalty he attempted to secure by lavish gifts, *al-mu'allafatu qulūbu-hum.*

101. Cf. Ghazzālī, in Chidiac, *Réfutation*, p. 28².

102. Cf. *ibid.*, Introduction, pp. 44–45; cf. also the self-view of Islamic tradition in Th. Nöldeke, "Über das Kitāb Jamīnī des . . . 'Utbī," *Sitzungsberichte der Wiener Akademie, phil.-hist. Cl.*, XXIII (1857), 37 (p. 25 of separate edition). Jāḥiẓ, *Ḥayawān*, V, 326–28, finds that it is not lack of intelligence but what we should call sociological reasons that cause adherence to foolish religious beliefs. A. Mez, *Abulḳāsim, ein baġdāder Sittenbild* . . . (Heidelberg, 1902), p. xi, refers to a passage (Cod. Mus. Br. Or. 3138, fol. 82a) in which Jāḥiẓ points out that certain characteristics of people are due not to their race but rather to their profession.

103. Cf., e.g., *'Uyūn*, I, 325–32.

104. Quoted with approval by Saḥāwī (d. 1497), in Rosenthal, *Historiography*, p. 417.

105. *Rasā'il al-Kindī al-falsafiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Abū Rīda (Cairo, 1369/1950), p. 103; translated by R. Walzer in *History of Philosophy Eastern and Western* (London, 1953), II, 131. Fārābī (d. 950), *Taḥṣīl as-sa'āda* (Hyderabad, 1345/1926), p. 47, shows a keen sense of the continuity of thought. He realizes that not only has philosophy reached the Arabs from the Greeks but that as a result of the Greek philosophers' labors mankind now has the means to revive philosophy whenever it has been eclipsed (the passage has also been noted by R. Walzer, *Oriens*, III [1950], 15). Cf. also Jāḥiẓ, *Ḥayawān*, I, 85–86, and from a different viewpoint, Averroes (d. 1198), *Tahāfut at-tahāfut*, ed. M. Bouyges (Beirut, 1930), pp. 582–83.

106. For the Persian conception of the professional (i.e., non-*adab*) qualifications to be required of a *kātib*, cf. Ibn Qutaiba, *'Uyūn*, I, 44–45 (trans. Horovitz, *Islamic Culture*, IV, 490); this notion should be contrasted with that of the secretary who is at the same time an *adīb*, as it has been sketched out, e.g., by Tauḥīdī, *op. cit.*, I, 99–100. The *kātib* as an educational and professional type had become problematic as early as the days of Jāḥiẓ and Ibn Qutaiba. In this connection cf. Pellat, *Le Milieu baṣrien* . . . , pp. 65–66.

107. G. E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam*, p. 251; for literature see *ibid.*, pp. 355–56, where F. Gabrieli, *Storia della letteratura araba* (Milan, 1951), pp. 180–82, should now be added.

108. Cf. *Buḥalā³*, p. 96 (trans., p. 130), for a list of such euphemisms; e.g., "success," to designate the arbitrary impositions of the tax collectors.

109. Cf., e.g., the extracts from al-Washshā³ (d. 936), *Kitāb al-muwashshā*, in Levy, *Chronicle*, pp. 121–25.

110. For an analysis of content and function of *adab*, cf. the writer in *Studies in Islamic Cultural History* (American Anthropological Association Memoir No. 76 [Menasha, Wisconsin, 1954]), pp. 4–7; German ed. "Islamkunde und Kulturwissenschaft," *Beigabe* to *ZDMG*, CIII (1953), pp. *4–6.

111. *Dīwān*, p. 116⁴⁻⁵. On *ad-Durrat al-Yatīma*, cf. C. Brockelmann, *ZDMG*, LIII (1899), 231–32. The extent to which the Persian tradition, especially in the areas of ethics and politics, had been absorbed by the middle of the ninth century can be readily observed by the number and importance of the quotations from (translated) Persian sources in Ibn Qutaiba's *'Uyūn*, esp. Book I.

112. *Ḥayawān*, I, 11.

113. By al-Laḥḥām (?), quoted by Yāqūt, *op. cit.*, II, 480¹⁴⁻¹⁶; cf. the taunts of the Bedouins for their eating of lizards, e.g., *Ḥayawān*, VI, 90–92, 101–2; lizards are not forbidden by the *sharī'a*.

114. *Op. cit.*, II, 217, 220.

115. *Op. cit.*, I, 468–69, s.v. Bāshghird.

116. Cf. the remarks of Muqaddasī, *BGA*, III, 309–10, on Gharjistān (east of Herat and north of Ghazna), which he describes as closed against the outside world. "And there true justice reigns, a remnant of the justice of the two 'Umars, the inhabitants are pious, *ṣāliḥūn*, and by nature inclined to the good." (The passage is quoted in abridgment by Yāqūt, *op. cit.*, III, 785, s.v. Gharshistān; the translated sentence is 785¹⁴⁻¹⁵.) On the other hand, we have the description of an equally backward group, the Qufs in Kirmān, near the Balūṣ, or Baluchi, who are berated for their barbarous ways, their lack of any religion whatsoever, and the merely nominal character of their affiliation with Islam, and whose chieftain is quoted for regretting that his people are leading such un-Islamic lives; cf. Yāqūt, *op. cit.*, IV, 147–50. For ancient idealization of the barbarian and its philosophical and ethical implications, cf. J. Jüthner, *Hellenen und Barbaren. Aus der Geschichte des Nationalbewusstseins* (Leipzig, 1923), pp. 55–59.

117. Yāqūt, *op. cit.*, III, 527⁵⁻¹², quoted by G. Vismara, *Bisanzio e l'Islam* (Milan, 1950), p. 79. The intensely competitive attitude toward Byzantium of the Muslims at an earlier time is somewhat naïvely revealed in the report of Mu'taṣim (833–42), writing to the Byzantine Emperor that the poorest of his own provinces would yield more taxes than the empire altogether; the propagandistic intent does not efface the naïveté. Cf. Yāqūt, *op. cit.*, II, 866¹⁻⁹.[1]

118. Cf., e.g., Ibn Baṭṭūṭa's observation, *op. cit.*, IV, 281, that in the Muslim section of Ḥansā (Hang-chou-fu), in China, the "markets are arranged as in Muslim territory."

119. E. Sachau (ed.), *Alberuni's India* (London, 1887); trans. by the same (London, 1888).[2]

120. Cf. J. C. Furnas, *The Anatomy of Paradise* (New York, 1937), p. 488, whose view is endorsed by R. Redfield, *The Primitive World and Its Transformations* (Ithaca, New York, 1953), p. 158.

121. Cf. F. Dölger, *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, LVI (1937), p. 8: "Rhomaios ist ... derjenige Bürger des allein legitimen römischen Reiches von Konstantinopel, der zugleich den allein richtigen Glauben dieses Reiches, die Orthodoxia, besitzt und damit eingegliedert ist in die einzige gottgewollte Kulturgemeinschaft der

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[1] See note (xi) of appendix. [2] See note (xii) of appendix.

Welt: die vorwiegend griechisch und christlich bestimmte Kulturgemeinschaft des oströmischen Reiches.''

122. In his unpublished *Taḥdīd nihāyāt al-amākin* (completed in Ghazna on September 21, 1025) Bêrûnî says that Islam gathered together the various nations, *al-umam al-mukhtalifa*, on the basis of mutual understanding, *ulfa*. It is thanks to Islam that the collecting of geographical information has become much easier than it was in previous times when national differences, *at-tabāyun al-millī*, proved the great obstacle to travel and therewith to geographical research; cf. A. Z. Validi Togan, ''Der Islam und die geographische Wissenschaft,'' *Geographische Zeitschrift*, XL (1934), 370–71. C. E. Dubler, *Abū Ḥāmid el Granadino y su relación de viaje por tierras eurasiáticas* (Madrid, 1953), p. 92, paraphrases Bêrûnî's views in this wise: '' . . . para al-Bîrûnî el credo de Mahoma, mucho más que religión, era un enorme espacio cultural, y el árabe, más que lengua del Alcorán, era el idioma de la ciencia; por conseguiente el Islam ofrecía, según él, una ideología común para una eficaz colaboración internacional de los eruditos.'' This realization of the unifying power of Islam does not prevent a feeling of superiority from animating the older and more acculturated Muslims vis-à-vis the more recent and less thoroughly Islamized groups. Cf., e.g., Ibn Faḍlân's attitude to the Muslim Bulgars whom he visited in 921/2, as he conveys it himself in his travel report, ed. trans. annotated A. Z. Validi Togan (Leipzig, 1939), pp. 22–24 of the Arabic text, pp. 47 and 49–51 of the German version.

III

ARAB CULTURE

THE CONCEPT of an Arab culture within the civilization of Islam may be accepted as a useful abstraction, somewhat like that of an Italian or German culture within the civilization of Western Christendom before the emergence of Italy and Germany as political units.

The civilization of Islam came into being as a result of the establishment of an Arabic empire in the seventh century A.D. when, for the first time in history, Arabic national consciousness was made politically effective by a religious leader.

The problem of the cultural cohesion of the Arab world cannot even be approached before the limited autonomy of Arab within Islamic civilization is realized. The Arabs, over against other Muhammadan peoples such as the Persians or the Turks, have kept their identity within the Islamic sphere, but the constituent elements of this identity no longer include as conspicuously that ethnic homogeneity that gave to the early leadership of the empire its peculiar compactness but later contributed to its ruin through its exclusiveness—social, political, and at times even religious.

Those Arabs, Bedouins for the most part, who conquered for the early caliphs the vast expanses between Transoxiana and northern Spain everywhere constituted a precariously small minority and could never have maintained their sovereignty without enlisting the active support of at least part of their erstwhile subjects. In Mesopotamia, in Syria, and in Palestine, the Semitic Arabs of the peninsula were superimposed on other Semitic population strata. Here they seem to have merged quickly with the native stock that for centuries had been accustomed to two loosely knit semi-independent Arab buffer states intended to protect the Persian and the Byzantine borders, respectively, against the ever threatening impact of the nomad. In due course of time the huge majority of the earlier settlers became completely Arabized and, for all practical purposes, indistinguishable from their masters.

In other parts of the empire racial amalgamation failed. In the Iranian countries and in Central Asia the thinly spread Arab

invaders were gradually absorbed by the older ethnic groups. In Egypt, the peasant population has become Arab in language only, largely maintaining the racial strains of Pharaonic times. Bedouins of true Arab descent are relegated to certain districts at the rim of the desert. The upper classes, and perhaps the population of the urban centers as a whole, show a strong admixture of Turkish and Circassian blood, thus reflecting the developments of Egyptian history during the last eight hundred years.

The decline of the Arab element during the last centuries of its domination facilitated the extinction of Muslim rule on Spanish soil (A.D. 1492). In North Africa, west of Tunisia, the racial and even the linguistic resistance of the Berbers could not be overcome. In the early days of Arab intrusion Berber nationalism inspired endless revolts. Though unable to break the foreign yoke, the Berbers could not be assimilated, and they succeeded in preserving many of their old institutions and customs, at the same time imparting the imprint of their mentality to North African Islam and the imprint of their phonetic habits to the Arabic dialects of that region.

The Arab belt is dominated by Islam. Founded by an Arab prophet, codified in an Arab sacred book, developed by an Arab state, and promoting Arab supremacy, Islam and Arabism have come to be largely identified. The fact that the dominion of Islam considerably exceeds the Arabic area does not militate against the central position the Arabs held and hold in propagation and organization of the Muslim faith. Nor does the heavy debt owed by Islam to non-Arab adherents displace the Arabs from their leading position, particularly since the non-Arabs—for the most part Persians and Turks—made their contribution in Arabic and only rarely stressed their national background. While for many centuries the principal Muslim sovereigns were non-Arabs, and Arabia had ceased to be the political center of gravity in Islam soon after the Prophet Muḥammad's death (A.D. 632), Arabia proper or, more specifically, Mecca, the Prophet's birthplace, has remained the heart of the Islamic world.

Muḥammad made Mecca the seat of the foremost sanctuary of Islam, the Ka‘ba, toward which the believer turns when praying, and he imposed the obligation on every Muslim to perform at least once in his life the pilgrimage to this hallowed place and to participate in the ceremonies which the Prophet had adapted from age-old heathen ritual. It is still a moot question whether the Prophet

conceived of his mission as universal or as confined to the Arabs (which, in his day, meant: to the Arab Peninsula). In any event Islam, in this respect resembling Judaism, remained at bottom a national religion, despite its universal claim and its international expansion. In the early days conversion to Islam was not complete for a non-Arab unless he also had found for himself a place in Arab society by becoming affiliated as a client to one of the Arab tribes. At the same time the rulers, while rather indifferent to the beliefs of their subjects outside of Arabia, rigorously pursued a policy of making Arabia entirely Muslim. The same tendency found expression in the particular aversion then shown by some circles to Christians of Arab blood—an aversion stirred less by their religious dissent than by the dissociation from national unity that seemed implied. Thus, although frequently indebted to non-Arabs for the higher development of Islam and although fighting under the banner of non-Arab princes for the greater glory and the wider dissemination of his faith, the Arab most fully realized the integration of religion and what we now call nationality. To him, state and religion became coextensive to such a degree that, not only did he come to interpret Islam and Christendom as nations rather than as bodies of believers, but he—otherwise than, for example, his Turkish fellow Muslims—became immune to that movement of complete secularization which at one time seemed inseparable from Westernization, even where he took the side of progress and reform as inspired by his contact with Europe.

This situation has suggested to some that religion, perhaps in combination with language, might be used as the decisive factor in accounting for the cohesion of Arab culture. Such an assumption, however, would disregard non-Muslim groups which, without any shadow of doubt, consider themselves and are considered Arabs. In fact, the Christian Arabs have everywhere been prominent in awakening Arab consciousness, and they have increasingly come to the fore as leaders in the independence movements in the several Arab countries, although it would appear that after victory is won they are again relegated to a more modest role.

In any case, profession of Islam will not suffice to delimit the ranks of the Arab community, although it will continue one of the significant, not to say dominant, features of that community as a whole.[1]

The tendency to identify Arab and Muslim issues is unmistakable in some quarters.[2] It is not surprising that Arab nationalism in its

fight for a new unity should avail itself of the traditional feeling of religious unity permeating the majority of its actual or prospective converts. In the mind of the medieval community, Islam as the true basis of citizenship counteracted to some extent the breakup of the Muslim world into regional powers constantly engaged in fratricidal strife.[3] The individual believer was at home wherever a Muslim prince held sway. Ibn Baṭṭûṭa, the famous traveler (d. 1377), a native of Tangier, was made a judge, first in Delhi (India) and later in the Maldive Islands, when he happened to pass through those countries. That great historian and statesman, Ibn Ḥaldûn (d. 1406), born in Tunis, served various princes in North Africa and finally sat as Chief Judge in Cairo. The number of non-Turks who, on the basis of their Muslim faith, rose to high and highest office in the Ottoman Empire is legion. The more backward an Islamic community appears from the modern—or the nationalist—viewpoint, the more readily it will assert its solidarity with those coreligionists whom the principle of nationality would bar from co-operation. As late as 1928 Ibn Suʿûd, king and spokesman of the Wahhâbî state of Arabia, declared that he was in the first place a Muhammadan and only in the second place an Arab.[4] It is in harmony with this attitude that Ibn Suʿûd could take Muslims from ʿIrâq, Syria, and Egypt into his cabinet without arousing animosities among his subjects. Whether such a procedure would still be possible, say, in Egypt, is more than doubtful.

Thus it might be felt that the substitution of common history or common tradition for common religion would suffice to portray more adequately the foundation of Arab cultural uniformity. Such an apparent broadening of the basis of unity, however, encounters two grave obstacles. It is true that the nationalistic non-Muslims of today would thus be brought into the fold, but at the same time it might be found that, during the last few centuries at least, the Arab world has not really been molded by a common history.

The experiences of Morocco, of Egypt, and of the Yemen, to select three areas somewhat at random, not only differed widely but show little or no connection or interaction. In other words, the several Arab states have on the whole lived their individual lives ever since the decline of the caliphate, at any rate throughout the last thousand years. Never did the Muslim states unite for concerted action against the Crusaders; never again has Islam attained that political unity which would correspond to its ideological cohesion. The Ottoman Empire at its height was far from embrac-

ing all Islamic territory and, besides, it may be questioned whether their common fate as parts of the empire would suffice to knit together those Arabs whose forebears shared this fate, however much their subjection to the Turk contributed to rouse their Arab consciousness. Insistence on their more recent history would inevitably tend to stress and strengthen regionalism and certainly could not provide a *raison d'être* for that vague uniformity which binds the Arab world together.

Within those areas where the whole population can look back on a historical experience truly common to all, the unsuitability of the criterion becomes apparent when it is realized that the several religious groups of which the population was and is composed are bound to view that experience with widely divergent emotions. It is debatable how much, if any, influence, say, the Copt in Egypt or the Christian in Mesopotamia has had in making the decisions and doing the deeds of the past centuries which now are presented to him as the history of his country and as his own historical background. The part his ancestors were made to play is none too apt to inspire that solidarity of collective reminiscences which forms one of the psychological mainstays of the modern national state.

It is true that love of the country of one's birth is not necessarily dependent on having a big political stake in it; and it is further true that, for example, in the United States children of immigrants —and often the immigrants themselves—accept the deeds of Washington and of Lincoln as a part of their personal historical background, although they know that their ancestors actually formed part of an entirely different community. So it may be concluded with some justification that, in becoming identified with a group, its past, too, is adopted in a perfectly natural process and as of right. While exactly this can be observed among the religious minorities in the Arab countries, the element of common history remains inadequate to explain the essence and limits of Arab unity. The cultivation of common tradition and common experience in the past is not the cause but the result of a feeling based on other emotionally potent possessions which are held in common.

It is entirely in keeping with the ideas prevailing in the West that community of language should emerge as the true foundation of the feeling of solidarity binding together and delimiting the Arab world. In a sense this unity is ideal rather than real, as actual oral communication between unschooled natives of Morocco and 'Irâq could hardly lead to satisfactory understanding.[5] But the con-

sciousness of being a speaker of Arabic and the pride taken in possessing one of the greatest and most beautiful—and to the native the greatest and the most beautiful—vehicles of human thought ever developed outweigh in the mind of the individual the indistinct realization of differences with which, in the majority of cases, he himself will hardly ever have to cope. Whatever the limits of the area within which the uneducated speaker could make himself adequately understood, he knows that the printed word will make its way all through the *'arabiyya*.[6]

The Koran, believed to embody every conceivable beauty of style and to be inimitable in point of diction, provides in the more backward districts the basis of all instruction and is sedulously studied in the elementary schools even in the most advanced countries. To the Muslim a verbatim revelation vouchsafed to Muḥammad by Allâh, the Lord of the Worlds, the Koran is to the Western student an outstanding literary achievement. Confronted with the task of expressing emotions and visions, doctrines and regulations, unfamiliar to his contemporaries in a language not hitherto used to such purpose, Muḥammad proved, in the introduction of new terms, turns of phrase, and forms of style, one of the great literary innovators of all times. The sacred character of the Book did not entirely prevent imitation nor even parody, but theological reverence soon isolated the Koran behind a cloud of fervent admiration. This attitude may account for the somewhat surprising fact that apart from innumerable quotations the influence of the Koran on the subsequent development of Arabic literature has been far less marked than we would be prepared to expect: in fact, this influence can be called rather insignificant. Suffice it to observe that the poetically most suggestive parts of the Koran, the colorful and passionate descriptions of the Last Day, are hardly ever reflected in the poetry of the early Islamic period.

Literature, to be exact, poetry and prose accounts of tribal affairs, had always been the art of the Arabs par excellence. Already the pagan Arabs appear to have been highly language-conscious. The incipient stages of the Arabic literary development are hidden from our sight, but the earliest surviving documents— dating probably from the second half of the fifth century A.D.— are products of a fairly evolved poetical convention, well on its way to becoming stereotyped. The extent to which subject matter and presentation had become uniform and subject to rigid rules has been considerably overrated by both Eastern and Western

students. Nevertheless, a forceful restriction of subjects and imagery admitted, on the one hand, and of poetical forms accepted, on the other, is characteristic of the classical tradition in Arabic poetry.

Ready understanding of this classical poetry has for many centuries been out of reach for even the educated speaker of Arabic. While perhaps not as far apart syntactically—and definitely less so with regard to grammatical forms—as the language of the Homeric poems and the Greek of the Hellenistic period, both vocabulary and background of the early poetry are sufficiently removed from present-day conventions to render this part of his heritage largely unintelligible to the contemporary Arab. His exclusion from its actual enjoyment does not, however, diminish the store he sets by this signal achievement of his ancestors—an achievement which those ancestors as well as most of the early collectors and critics believed unmatched by any foreign literature.

Leaving aside classical poetry, every educated speaker of Arabic participates, as it were, in the ownership of a huge body of writings dealing with all branches of endeavor known to the Middle Ages and of a slightly less voluminous corpus of *belles-lettres* still for the most part within his reach. The adoption of the Western romantic attitude toward folk art has increased those venerable, and in part extremely valuable, treasures by conceding some standing to the once despised products of popular imagination, such as *The Arabian Nights* or the *'Antar Novel*. Thus the consciousness of being heirs and continuators of an ample and brilliant literature greatly strengthens the consciousness of cultural unity.

The misconception that Arab national self-consciousness is an outgrowth of the nineteenth century must be guarded against with great care. The nineteenth century saw its revival, its quickening into a political force, and, of course, a substantial enlargement of scope and territory, but the sentiment dates back *mutatis mutandis* to the days of paganism. The heathen Arab was extremely race-minded. The purity of his genealogy, i.e., of his Arab descent on both sides, was highly valued and, therefore, jealously watched. Not many half-breeds were admitted to social equality before Islam. Religion was all the more powerless to eradicate ethnic pride as the foundation of the empire conferred an undreamed of boon on membership in the dominant race.

Side by side with the fight for influence in the state, waged by the subjected nations with increasing fury and success, went the

fight to discredit that race prejudice under whose protection social discrimination against the Muslim of non-Arab ancestry was practiced in open conflict with the injunctions of the faith. The political monopoly was gradually yielded under the rule of the Abbasid caliphs (from A.D. 750), but the social preponderance of the Arabs never declined completely since it was they who had brought forth the Prophet and the dynasties of the ruling caliphs. By that time, however, the descent on the mother's side was no longer considered relevant; even most of the later caliphs were the sons of foreign-born slave girls. Moreover, the racial composition of the upper strata became more and more complex as the influx of Iranians and Turks increased, some of them becoming Arabized, some unable or unwilling to be assimilated.

In this manner (outside of the peninsula proper) Arab consciousness as a political factor weakened, or at least lost to a large extent its practical importance since the ethnic distinctions within the erstwhile empire tended to recede behind the supernatural unity of Islam. Little did it matter that time and again events betrayed the influence of groupings national rather than religious. The independent development of Persia was interpreted less as an Iranian national revival than as the secession of the Persian Shī'a sectarians. The national wars between Turkey and Persia from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries were conducted on both sides as against heretics, with all the fervor and bitterness of religious strife. When in the sixteenth century Muslim Turkey had united, at least in name, the whole of the Arab belt, with the sole exception of Morocco, within her empire, the Arab spirit in Hither Asia became dormant, so to speak, the Bedouins of the peninsula being perhaps least affected by the tendencies of the period. For it was the northern Bedouins who, although devoid of nationalist tendencies and intent solely upon restoring primeval Islam, through the Wahhâbî movement gave the first impulse to the reawakening of that political Arab self-consciousness that the victory of the Arab religion had well-nigh obliterated.

When all the elements that today go into the making of an Arab have been considered (in so far as they will yield to analysis), allowance will yet have to be made for an additional factor, and this is a purely psychological one. It is, in the last resort, for the individual to decide (and for the community to accept his decision) that he will identify himself primarily as an Arab—and not as an Egyptian or a Lebanese; as an Arab—and not above all as an Arab

Christian or an Arab Muslim; as an Arab—and not as an Arabic-speaking "Phoenician" or an Arabic-speaking descendant of the Pharaohs. It is this very factor of the personal adoption of an Arab affiliation which, in the case of certain local intelligentsias and of certain non-Muslim groups, makes the personal adherence to "Arabism" so much of a matter of soul-searching and so intensely meaningful when it has been reached and, again, so painfully problematical when it is not readily ratified by those Arabic-speaking circles who would still confine full membership in the Arabic world, or its political segments, to the Muslim representative of their civilization.[7]

The casual onlooker is struck by the picturesque uniformity of Islamic civilization. Individual objects as well as entire cities appear to speak the same *Formensprache*, most clearly symbolized by the sinuous intricacies of the Arabic script, the foreignness of it all being emphasized and protected by a difficult and puzzling language. Gradually, the student becomes aware of the inexhaustible diversity hiding behind the colorful veil, and he perceives the national and the regional elements. Further analysis reveals the alien provenience of much that looked indigenous; still, in the end, the most careful investigation will have to testify to that unity in the spiritual structure and that amazing power of adaptation that will present the foreign borrowing, hardly recognizable, in native garb. More and more we have come to discover non-Arab or non-Islamic elements in the framework of this civilization: the Christian, the Jewish, and, increasingly prominent, the Hellenistic, and the Persian, and even the Indian contributions stand out clearly to the trained eye, the early Muslim scholars themselves being alive to some extent to their dependence on non-Muslim erudition. The evolution of Muḥammad's preaching with its comparatively poor background of Arabian civilization into the cultural system of Islam with its claim to universal validity, forcefully coloring with its own and unmistakable patina every single object appropriated and every single thought accepted, is one of the most fascinating spectacles history presents.

The center of this system is religion. The modern Occidental, attracted by the theological development of the rigid monotheism preached by Muḥammad, is apt to overlook the subordinate place of doctrine in this system which aims primarily at regulating all and everything, in the life of the individual as well as in that of the community, in obedience to specific prescriptions issued by the

Lord through His Prophet. There is nothing too slight, too personal, too intimate not to stand in need of being arranged by the divine will. This approach, while completely ritualizing life, imparts meaning to the most insignificant act and hallows it as a necessary affirmation of the eternal order. No distinction exists between matters sacred and profane since nothing is religiously irrelevant. Such a system is bound to prize stability. God is above change and so is His order, revealed once and for all by His Messenger. So change has to be justified as the true interpretation of the divine ordinance finally arrived at, as the reversal from impious innovation to the purity of the beginnings, or else it must be ignored, denied, or fought.

The Muslim world has frequently been exposed to forcible political changes and to thoroughgoing transformations of social stratification; beliefs were adopted and discarded, conventions and mores developed and forgotten, but the conviction of the basic and unalterable identity of the believer's way of life from the day of the Prophet through the frailties of his own time until the world comes to its appointed end on the Day of Resurrection upheld the ideal unity of a community which, at least politically, had long ceased to exist. It is the main endeavor of the conservative Muslim of today to save this continuity either by proving the compatibility of "modernism" with Islam or by arguing Islamic origin for Western contributions and impeaching the divines of the past for their neglect.

Obviously, originality will not be as highly prized as we are wont to prize it. But the Arab's unimaginative mind—the flourishing invention and the fantastic element in works like *The Arabian Nights* are due mostly to Persian and Indian inspiration—and his sober realism, his powers of accurate observation, his exactitude, his collector's diligence are well accommodated by the pattern of Islamic civilization. The formalism of the religious approach is repeated in literature, even in science. Throughout the great age of Arabic literature the critics placed verbal perfection above poetical originality, and the public was well contented to hear the familiar motifs again and again if only they were couched in choice and carefully shaded language. A new twist given a hackneyed theme, a small step forward toward absolute stylistic perfection, sufficed to justify the poet's labors. Inherited forms were faithfully preserved. For a few centuries poetry grew in scope and beauty, overcoming the opposition of the philologist and the con-

servative critic, but after A.D. 1100 all beauty of invention, all
the freshness that would charm the Western reader, was definitely
stifled by the excessive elaboration of wording and the deteriora-
tion of taste brought about by the compulsion to outdo predeces-
sors in the treatment of well-worn ideas, within the narrow limits
of unalterable forms. The contempt shown toward popular poetry
hastened the natural trend of any learned literature to lose contact
with reality.

The same disregard for mere factuality is betrayed in the Arabs'
attempt at political science. At a time when the power of the
caliphate had dwindled to near-nothingness, when it was evident to
anybody who wished to open his eyes that the glory of the uni-
versal Islamic state had departed forever, al-Mâwardî (d.1058),
when developing his constitutional theories laid out in grandiose
detail the functions and duties of the caliph as the protector of
Islam. Never once did he stop to bring his postulates in accord with
the world in which he was living; never once did he deviate from
the normative truth as deducible from revelation and tradition; and
he would have indignantly rejected the suggestion that he had
written an utopian book. He recognized and deplored the short-
comings of his period, but he took no note of them for his system.
Despite his participation in practical politics (noticeable though it
is in his clever adjustment of caliphal and extracaliphal power as
well as in his precedent-guided discussion of the problems of deposi-
tion and succession), al-Mâwardî would never have conceded to
mere facts higher validity than to logical necessity.

The very meticulousness with which the Lord was observed to
have laid down the rules of life for the believer, with a view to his
ultimate salvation, stimulated the interest in this world. Outside
of small circles of devotees whose pained souls were preparing in
prayer for the terrible Hour that would decide whether their sleep-
less eyes would see the face of the Lord in Paradise or whether
eternal damnation was to be their lot—outside of those circles,
the secular spirit was strong.

Islam has always been humanist in the sense that it gave its
attention to man rather than to metaphysics or the conquest of
nature. This is not to say that Islam is averse to speculation. The
subtlety of its theological distinctions easily matches the finesse of
the great teachers of the Church, and it was Muslim philosophy
that inspired Western thought in the later Middle Ages. But the
educational ideals developed within Islam demand *polymathia,* an

encyclopedic knowledge of all and everything established and experienced by the human mind. Revelation provides the key to this as well as to the other world, but to be versed in religious knowledge is not enough. Familiarity with the salient facts of nature and history is also required, not for the professional theologian, but for the cultured man of the world and for the learned in general.

The erudite is not expected to add to the store of inherited truths. Explanation and comment make up his task, aside from the presentation and skillful organization of the material which, as time progresses, is augmented by the accepted opinions of his predecessors and teachers. While the warrior qualities of the early Arabic ideal gradually lose their compelling attraction, the traditional emphasis on perfection of style and command of poetical and rhetorical technique increases constantly. The *kâtib*, secretary of state, composer of official documents, influences the concepts of educational accomplishment. By his elaborate style he wins admiration for himself, and added prestige for his princely employer. The art of saying things well, in fact, of saying them better than anyone else, spurs the ambitions of the scribe, who employs his all-embracing knowledge of history, of literature, of theology, and of legal tradition to conceal the monotony of his spirit behind a fireworks of allusions and tropes, rendering facts and the substance of things subservient to aesthetical pleasure. Cleverness and delicacy of taste, an awareness of nuances almost painful to the modern Occidental, produce fragile masterpieces of incredible refinement but of utter sterility and emptiness—documents of an intellect sensitive only to its own satisfaction.

This trend of mind makes for playful planning, for that readiness to indulge in exuberant schemes which is apt to contrast cruelly with an apparent inability for the sustained labors of execution. There is hardly any inherited trait the modernist Arab wishes so ardently to break away from as this intoxicating twin-gift of audacious dreaming and executive ineffectiveness. There is no aspect of Arab life that would not gain by derhetorization.

It is this accentuation of the formal side of intellectual achievement, coupled with a certain indifference to the betterment of his lot and, in point of fact, the spiritual and political barrenness of Arab life since the Crusades, which have fostered in the West the idea of Arab decadence. But the age-long reverie has ended, and the Arabs find themselves awake in a world that has completely changed, and changed for the most part to their disadvantage. Life

in the medieval community was an easy life compared with the unprecedented tension of the modern age. Discipline, patience, and social co-operation, a refocusing of intellectual interests, new standards in human relations as well as in public morality—one can but admire the effort to activate the virtues incident to a newly acquired system of values.

The West has been fond of viewing the Oriental as a fatalist, a man, in other words, who resigns himself in all vicissitudes to the whims of destiny, renouncing personal initiative as useless if not impious. It is true that in its answer to the problem of Free Will Islam inclines to a deterministic solution; it is equally true that it cherishes the concept of predestination, and finally it must be admitted that, had the *ijmá'*, the *communis opinio*, vigorously demanded a different doctrine, the theologians could have interpreted the none too consistent pronouncements of the Koran in a manner to suit the spiritual needs of the believers. All this is to say that the Muslim deeply feels man's insignificance, the uncertainty of his fate, and the omnipotence of the uncontrollable power above him. Therefore, perhaps, he is more readily prepared than the Westerner to accept the accomplished fact. Constitutional law sanctions the rule of the successful usurper. In an accommodating mood, not quite devoid of cynicism, the Muslim usually acquiesces in impositions backed by superior force. He is aware of the transient character of human power and is apt to minimize its ultimate influence. On the other hand, one glance at the countless rebellions in Muslim lands will show that the believer's acquiescence had very definite and rather narrow limits. However often disappointed in its expectations, the populace was ever ready to fight for a cause instead of patiently waiting for the preordained outcome. So it seems highly doubtful whether "fatalism" can be actually described as a retarding power in politics, unless it be considered one among several coexisting attitudes which vaguely influence human reaction to the experience of living.

The spirit of present-day democracy is the spirit of progress. In fact, the belief in progress transcends ideological boundaries and can be regarded as the common property of the Western and of the Westernized parts of the world. Medieval Islam did not hold this belief. On the contrary, it shared the belief—that had generally prevailed in antiquity—that mankind is on the decline and that civilization is deteriorating. This belief, very naturally, was accompanied by unbounded reverence for the contribution of former

generations. The consciousness of being an epigone never left the Muslim intellectual. Contrary experience proved unable to eliminate this basic attitude. The ninth and tenth centuries A.D. saw a most impressive cultural upsurge. Science and literature developed as never before, material culture progressed at an astounding rate, the political power of the Muslims had continued to grow for centuries—but all this barely sufficed to impart to some exclusive circles of predominantly literary interests a not too assured feeling of superiority over the past. Contemporary poetry was recognized as equal, occasionally as superior, to that of the days of yore; but the same critic who most valiantly fought against the prejudice favoring the Ancients proclaimed on another page of his book the inevitable, the natural, inferiority of each subsequent age.[8]

It is characteristic that the believers in progress are found largely among the sectarians or those not in good standing with orthodoxy. Thus it is the Fāṭimids of the tenth century whose adherents are carried forward by a feeling of youthful vigor; it is the Ismāʿīlī dignitary, Ḥamīd ad-Dīn Kirmānī (d. 1017), who speaks of the superiority of his own age over the past;[9] and it is again a great scholar of unorthodox (but not sectarian) leanings, the physician and philosopher, Abū Bakr ar-Rāzī (d. 925 or 934), who insists that the epigone can and will surpass the Ancients provided he has studied their works and made them the basis of his own endeavors.[10] Toward the end of the tenth century, the Ashʿarite theologian, al-Bāqillānī (d. 1013), in discussing the problem of the sinlessness of the prophets, goes so far as to suggest that "in Muḥammad's community there might be some more excellent than Muḥammad [himself in the period] from his call to his death."[11] Needless to say, the consensus never would endorse this view.

This world view received new support from the depressing political situation as it developed through the decay of the caliphate. Certainly the thoughtless traditionalism of the later Middle Ages was greatly strengthened when, to use the Arabic expression, "the door of independent searching" (*bāb al-ijtihād*) was considered closed and contemporary effort restricted to endless repetition and regrouping of the work done by the earlier authorities. The gap between the melancholy doctrine of inescapable decline and the impetuous optimism characteristic of the "modern" age is not to be bridged. The attitudes are irreconcilable. "Modernism" calls for initiative. And far more deadly to initiative than the Muslim version of the concept of predestination is the conviction that what-

ever our exertions, the world in which we live is bound to decline.

Such, then, was the mood of Arab culture when it found itself once again face to face with an advancing West. From time immemorial, waves of cultural encroachment had surged back and forth around the Mediterranean basin. Hellenism had taken root in the Near East in the wake of Alexander's armies; the heirs to the Roman Empire were expelled by the successors of the Arab Prophet, to return as Christian knights and traders for a precarious two hundred years of Crusader colonization. When their strongholds had fallen, the turn of the East had come, and the Turks took over the Balkans to the very threshold of Central Europe. But slowly the Turks lost their grip and receded closer and closer to Asia.

Although, in general, fear and incomprehension marked the outlook of East and West on one another, and although the latent political and religious hostility between Islam and Christianity—glowering at one another across the sea—only rarely softened to indifference, a partial community of foundation made recurrent interaction of their fates appear less accidental, more meaningful, and more fruitful even, than a clash of any two unrelated culture systems would have been. In a sense, war between the West and the Near East was civil war, and cultural interchange, a development within one area of civilization.

The Greek heritage, Roman law, the concept of revealed religion, monotheism, the technique of philosophical thought, the scholastic approach to theology—they were present on both sides of the Mediterranean, in different proportions and amalgamations, to be sure, encased in local, alien matter, appearing distorted in the eyes of both antagonists, and put to perverted use. Still intellectual communication remained possible, with its usual result of stimulation and irritation.

And now, once more the Arab world seeks and shuns the disintegrating though kindred spirit of the West. Westernization is not primarily a result of Western power, although this power gives Western civilization its prestige and induces readjustment for the sake of competition. It is when independence has been achieved or political ambition has become a conscious motive of action that a sense of backwardness and the painful realization of the intellectual impoverishment of the traditional patterns hasten the drive toward modernization. Colonial regimes are more favorable to the status quo than are communities of recent independence. One

might say that, almost against the will of the ruling classes, the logic of the political process compels the taking of ever another step toward Westernization, making the remaining features of the inherited scheme of things appear more and more incongruous. Gradually landowner control of Near Eastern urban civilization is giving way, gradually a class of industrial entrepreneurs is coming into its own. The new governments may feel uneasy about their unruly intelligentsias, their restless and politically over-alert student groups, but the modern state cannot do without them— it could not exist without the accumulation of educational and administrative skills they have to offer; and they are the principal bearers of the nationalism on which the very existence of the state seems predicated. As yet, the "uneconomical" behavior of many of the great property owners—their absenteeism, their standards of "conspicuous consumption"—are in strange contrast, not only with the needs and the best interests of the region, but with the spirit of that rationalized (and industrialized) economy which, on the Western model, is expected to raise the standard of living, the national wealth, and the international standing of the nation.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty in the way of the new Arab countries is the necessity to overcome rapidly the traditional Islamic concept of, and attitude toward, the state as such. Islam never developed the idea of "the State as an independent political institution," which has been so characteristic of classical and Western thought. "In Islam the State was not a community or an institution, but the totality of those governed, *umma*, with the *imâm* as their leader. As a result, the Oriental State had no conception of citizens in the modern sense."[12] Government was not everybody's business nor even that of a privileged class. Participation in executive power was, in the public mind, as haphazard and accidental as were, apart from taxation, the contacts of individual and government in general.

Good government, that is, government in conformance with Sacred Law, had in the eyes of the pious ceased to exist, when, only a few decades after the death of the Prophet, the *mulk*, royalty, of the Umayyads replaced the succession of the Well-Guided caliphs. While both to the legist and to the community at large any established government was legal government which had to be obeyed, most of its acts were bound to be unlawful or at best outside the religiously sanctioned law, whose unalterability made it appear ever more incomplete and impracticable as with the passing

of time the complexity of the culture increased. Consequently, the more scrupulous came to think of participation in government as a danger to their souls. Aloofness protected from sin, and resigned submission was deemed a sufficient concession to expediency so that the community would be kept from disintegrating, and order of a sort would be maintained.

In the later Middle Ages, when secular concerns found themselves more and more disregarded by the educational system, the intelligentsia no longer interfered with the government beyond compelling the justification of major innovations by having the religious authorities certify their compatibility with the Law. The absence of political education or civic virtue from the catalogue of manly accomplishments is among the strongest contrasts between the Islamic ideal of man, on the one side, and that of the Greeks and the post-Renaissance West, on the other. As an inevitable concomitant of the Muslim outlook on the state, "the Eastern mind is more cynical in political matters than the Western, and will always assume that the Government, as the strongest organization in the community, will in the long run get its own way by fair means or by foul."[13] It is not difficult to discern in the actual political and administrative life of the Arab countries the conflict between the two attitudes toward the state.

This conflict is deepened by another psychological element—the attraction of Western institutions as a symbol of progress. There is no precedent in Islam for representative government, in spite of the koranic verse (3:153) in which God asks His Prophet "to consult them [the believers] in the affairs [of war]" and that other verse (42:36) where those are praised "whose affairs are guided by Mutual Counsel, *shûrà*," interpreted to refer to Parliament—verses which are much quoted by modernists to legitimate constitutional reform and to prove it to be a return to the ways of the Founder.

Islamic Law stipulates election of the caliph or popular consent to his assumption of power, but this was never construed to imply what we now would call democratic voting procedure, not even at the outset. If nothing else, the technical impossibility of organizing a survey of the popular will would have prevented an election on a broad basis. Islamic constitutional law never limited the power of the ruler. Legal theory and accepted custom imposed certain bodily and mental qualifications on any candidate for the highest office, but no curtailment of executive absolutism was envisaged. At one time the beginnings of an oligarchical government appeared. When

the last Umayyad was deposed in Spain (A.D. 1031), an aristocratic council took over in Cordova. Similar bodies of notables ruled Toledo and Seville. But aside from the fact that those bodies never sought a popular mandate and that, in Cordova, the council remained under the presidency of three members of the same family throughout its existence, this type of administration, equally foreign to tradition and popular sentiment, suffered an early collapse. At best it can be called an interesting experiment.[14]

Ideas of popular representation, constitutional restriction of the executive power, separation of the judiciary and the executive, and the philosophy behind them are importations from the West. Nevertheless, parliamentary institutions have been advocated and greeted with genuine enthusiasm in various Eastern countries, and the people are rapidly being familiarized with the apparatus of representative government. In the Near East a constitution means not only a real advance in popular participation in the management of public affairs but an increase in self-respect as well. Parliament is the shining badge of those countries that have caught up with Europe. The actual distribution of property and power, together with the comparative inexperience of the people in handling the intricate machinery of democratic government, often discredit the new system in Occidental eyes. Such rash judgment, however, is unfair. The Westerner must never forget that the situation within which recent reforms originated bears more resemblance to the Europe of 1789 than to that of 1918. The French Revolution shifted some power to the *tiers état*—that is exactly what is happening in the Near East, where the middle classes are gradually coming into their own. It took Europe well over a century to extend the franchise (let alone the actual sharing of power) to the working classes. And side by side with glaring class distinctions Islamic society cherishes an egalitarian attitude, well enshrined in Koran and in tradition, which in the long run may well prove the emotional basis for an effective participation in government of the lower orders.

In fact, the Arab adherents of democracy are fond of pointing with pride to the egalitarian spirit of their Bedouin ancestors. Desert life breeds individualism; there is social stratification but no personal inequality. The Bedouin never considers himself inferior to his leader. Lawrence describes the painful shock which the Bedouin warriors experienced when confronted for the first time with the very different relationship between officers and men in the Anglo-

Indian army.[15] It is again the desert, it is argued, where true liberty is found. As the Bedouin never is prepared to sacrifice the smallest prerogative of his unbounded and somewhat purposeless liberty, his life may be pictured as embodying an ideal example for less independent if more highly organized groups. Within the fold of Islam all believers are of equal standing. No priestly class relegates the layman to the background. Prior adoption of the faith implies no superiority over the recent convert. Although these principles may not always be honored, they constitute the guiding ideals and provide ample justification to the Muslim, or Arab, progressive to propagate democracy as in perfect accord with the fundamental traits of Islam or the Arab race, if not directly as an Islamic contribution.

But, on a different level, the conflict of the two views of the state is more seriously complicated by a clash between the goals that the traditional culture and Westernized culture set for the individual. The traditional pattern, binding Muslims and non-Muslims alike, tied in the life of the individual with that of his family, clan, and denominational group, not inconsiderably restricting his social and economic mobility. At the same time, his spiritual goal was completely self-centered, as he aimed at nothing but a satisfactory relationship with his Lord. This relationship was imperfect without a certain devotion to the community as the medium of the good life, but was otherwise purely individualistic since salvation was, by and large, a matter of personal adjustment between the believer and Allâh.

Ideally, the modern Arab has to be a citizen of the state before being a member of his group. This shift in his primary loyalties, accompanying the change in the social-economic setting, adds to his freedom in terms of social and cultural mobility. It tends to lift him out of group life and to impose full and individualistic independence on him. But, simultaneously, it replaces or at least supplements his individualistic conception of personal fulfillment by enjoining co-operation toward the new collective goals of community advancement and community power. He is becoming responsible for the continuance and the progress of an entity whose operation he does not yet quite comprehend and whose demands he can, for the time being, meet only by the emotional outburst of extreme nationalism.

The tensions provoked by conflicting goals and contrasting traditions are manifest in almost every aspect of the individual's life.

There will be discord between his traditional group affiliations and the claims of the nation. He will find himself pressed to choose between secularism and Islam, or between conservatism and modernism within Islam, or again between forward-looking and backward-looking religious reform. He will have to select what Western habits and usages he may accept for himself and will not infrequently find himself leading two types of life, in the family circle and outside, each with its own set of conventions. He will be aware of the indispensability of foreign assistance but will fall a prey to xenophobia, and in general he will in the same breath hate and love, admire and despise, the West, whose spiritual structure he has no means of understanding and which reveals itself to him most obviously through its technology and political aggressiveness. This array of incompatibles will pursue him into the realms of scholarship, of literature, of art—the organization of education will be the area where he will have to take his stand most uncompromisingly and where his choice will be most visible and most consequential. Conflicting prides and conflicting embarrassments will beset him—the pride of progress will be tempered by the alien origin of its inspiration; the moral and aesthetic satisfaction of his ancestral ways may fade when tested for their scientific defensibility. He feels he is creating a new world, but he knows that much of it is imitation or, at most, adaptation. He is enthusiastic and headstrong, but at the same time torn between two ideals that have as yet not been reconciled and neither of which he is ready to abandon. He is eager to avail himself of every means of progress. But at the same time he is afraid of losing himself to the West. There are few who think of themselves as completely of the West. What the Arab nations crave is a dream of contradictions but for all that not necessarily incapable of partial realization: the construction of a modern state together with the retention of the spiritual basis of their medieval existence—Islam.

NOTES

1. It is characteristic of the Sudan that the term "Arab" is used as a synonym for "Muslim," with utter disregard of the ethnic background of the believer; cf. C. G. Seligmann, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (14th ed.; 1929), II, 198.

2. Cf., e.g., H. A. R. Gibb's report on the Third Muslim Congress in Jerusalem, December 7–17, 1931, in *Survey of International Affairs*, 1934, pp. 99–109. In contrast, cf. the tendencies of certain circles in Pakistan to make their community the true center of Islam.

3. Cf. the famous verse by Nahâr b. Tausi'a al-Yashkurî (d. 721), which is quoted, e.g., by Ibn Qutaiba, *Kitâb ash-shi'r wa'sh-shu'arâ'*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden, 1904), p. 342:

My father is Islam, no other father do I have beside him, when others boast of
    their descent from Qais or Tamīm.

The line has been translated by M. Asín Palacios, *al-Andalus*, III (1935), 389, from
a ms. passage by Ibn aṣ-Ṣīd al-Baṭalyausī (d. 1127).

4. E. Topf, *Die Staatenbildungen in den arabischen Teilen der Türkei* . . . (Hamburg, 1929), p. 140.

5. Already al-Muqaddasī (writing in A.D. 985), *Descriptio imperii Moslemici*,
ed. M. J. de Goeje (2d ed.; Leiden, 1906), p. 243⁸, found the Maghribi Arabic
difficult to understand; cf. also J. Fück, *Arabīya, Untersuchungen zur arabischen
Sprach- und Stilgeschichte, Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl.*, XLV/1 (1950), p. 108.

6. Cf. the opinion expressed by the writer Maḥmūd Kāmil al-Muḥāmī in the
Preface to his novel *al-Mutamarridūn* as translated by H. Pérès, *Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales, Université d'Alger*, V (1939–41), 192: "Dès maintenant,
je pose comme principe qu'il faut nécessairement employer la langue populaire
usuelle dans le dialogue, tant que le conte est égyptien: si j'étais obligé de contrevenir à cette règle dans certains contes que j'ai publiés dans la revue *al-Hilāl*,
c'est en égard aux lecteurs des pays arabes éloignés et des pays d'exil (*bilād al-mahjar*) où se trouvent nos frères syriens qui ne peuvent pas comprendre notre
langue populaire usuelle. . . ."

7. Cf. W. Marçais' interpretation of the concept of Arabization, *Annales de
l'Institut d'Études Orientales*, IV (1938), 3: "Ce que j'entends par arabisation, c'est,
avant tout, l'adoption, comme idiome de la conversation et comme idiome de
civilisation, de la langue arabe. C'est l'emploi exclusif de l'arabe pour dire ce qui est
senti et ce qui est pensé. C'est le fait de se réclamer de la civilisation dont cette
langue constitue l'instrument d'expression, d'en considérer la production littéraire
et scientifique comme un patrimoine glorieux, d'en tenir les chefs-d'oeuvre pour
des modèles. C'est le désir et la prétention d'appartenir au monde où cette langue
est parlée et écrite, de sentir comme lui, de penser comme lui, de se modeler sur
lui dans la vie sociale et politique, rationnelle et affective. C'est proprement la
liaison intime d'un certain état linguistique et d'un ensemble de goûts esthétiques,
d'aspirations sentimentales et d'habitudes intellectuelles qui n'ont rien à voir avec
l'ethnographie et l'anthropologie. Que l'arabisation soit intimement liée, dans
l'Afrique du Nord comme ailleurs, à l'islamisation, c'est chose si évidente qu'il n'est
pas besoin d'y insister." Cf. also the statement of J. Berque, *Studia Islamica*, I, i
(1953), 141: "On peut dire en ce sens que, dans cette longue crise d'identité qu'est
l'histoire de l'Afrique du Nord, plus encore que celle d'autres pays, un idéalisme
à argument oriental et un réalisme terriblement concret et vivace se livrent une
joute dont l'issue a varié avec les siècles."[1]

8. Ibn Rashīq al-Qairawānī (d. 1070), *ʿUmda* (Cairo, 1353/1934), II, 226. Cf. the
significant line of Mutanabbī (d. 965): "I blame this time [of ours] for its little men,
uhaila-hu." (*Dīwān*, ed. F. Dieterici [Berlin, 1861], CVII, 6a [p. 298].) Abū 'l-ʿAlāʾ
al-Maʿarrī (d. 1057), *Risālat al-ghufrān*, ed. Bint ash-Shāṭiʾ (Cairo, 1950), pp. 358–
61, discusses the line as a specimen of the *topos* of the *damm ad-dahr*, the disparagement of Time, which the modern inherited from the ancient poets. Much later, Suyūṭī
(d. 1505) says in an interesting passage of his *Kitāb al-itqān fī ʿulūm al-Qurʾān*
(Cairo, 1318/1900), II, 85: "How admirable are the ancients, *salaf*, with their control of those subtle ideas which the later authors strive a long time to master, wasting
their lives over them [with the result that] at best they keep intact the [sacred]
preserve, *ḥimā*."

The conservative reformers of the group around the Egyptian magazine *al-Manār* proclaim progress as a divine law and consider the later origin of Islam one
reason for its superiority over Christianity. This idea is essentially a development of

[1] See note (xiii) of appendix.

a traditional view which had been very neatly expressed, e.g., by Sharastání (d. 1153), *Nihâyat al-iqdâm*, ed. trans. A. Guillaume (London, 1934), p. 499[14-5] (trans., 158): "Islam abrogates all previous codes of which it is the perfection."

9. Cf. the passage from his unpublished *Kitâb ar-Riyâḍ*, which H. Corbin quotes and translates on pp. 58–59 of his "Étude préliminaire" to his and M. Moʿîn's edition of Nâṣir-i Ḥusrav's *Jâmiʿ al-ḥikmatain* (Teheran and Paris, 1953).

10. *Opera philosophica*, ed. P. Kraus, I (Cairo, 1939), 301. Râzî's position resembles that taken by Bernard of Chartres (d. *ca.* 1130) when he speaks of his contemporaries in relation to the ancients as of dwarfs standing on the shoulders of giants (and therefore seeing more than they). Râzî goes on to stress the ethical value of philosophical investigation as the only means for the soul to cleanse itself of the turbidness of this world (*ibid.*, pp. 302, 303).[1]

11. *Apud* Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitâb al-fiṣal fî 'l-milal* (Cairo, 1317), IV, 2[11-12] (who rejects his view); the passage is referred to by A. S. Tritton, *Muslim Theology* (London, 1947), p. 181.

12. A. Bonné, *State and Economics in the Middle East. A Society in Transition* (London, 1948), p. 8.

13. R. Coke, *The Heart of the Middle East* (London, 1925), p. 230.

14. The Banû Jahwar presided over the Council in Cordova, 1031–70; cf. C. Seybold, *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1913–34), I, 878. For comparable phenomena in other areas, cf. B. Spuler, *Saeculum*, V (1954), 190.

15. T. E. Lawrence, *Revolt in the Desert* (New York, 1927), p. 314. But cf. with regard to the misleading idea of "Bedouin democracy" the excellent observations of E. Tyan, *Institutions du droit public musulman*, Vol. I: *Le Califat* (Paris, 1954), pp. 69–71.

[1] See note (xiv) of appendix.

EXPRESSIONS

IV

THE KORAN

THE KORAN—*qur'ân*, recitation, from Syriac *qeryânâ*, *lectio* and lectionary—is the collection of the individual revelations, also called *qur'ân*, which God commanded Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallâh of Mecca to communicate to his people. Between *ca.* A.D. 610 and the Prophet's death in 632, a considerable body of sacred material was thus transmitted to the growing Muslim community but no official effort made to preserve and systematize it. Muḥammad's death, unexpected at least in its suddenness, ended the direct rule of Allâh over His expanding state. The passage (Koran 87:6–7): "We [i.e., God] shall cause thee to recite, without forgetting,—(7). Except what Allâh willeth; . . . " suggests some loss of early revelations. But it is unlikely that many prophetic utterances should have been forgotten, especially as there is evidence of Muḥammad's having had some of his later messages written down, and even of his bestowing editorial care on them.[1]

Four private collections of the available revelations were followed and gradually superseded by an official edition promulgated under the caliph ʿUthmân (644–56).[2] The ʿUthmânic Koran organizes the material in 114 sections or *sûras*. A short introductory prayer, which adapts Judeo-Christian formulas, is followed by the text proper, with the *sûras* arranged rather inaccurately according to length. Two apotropaic charms conclude the book. The Koran of Ubayy b. Kaʿb had two more *sûras*—short prayers of questionable genuineness. The Shîʿa charge malicious omission by the editors of individual verses and even of complete *sûras* supporting their doctrines. The only two Shîʿite *sûras* which have come to light are obvious forgeries; the other omissions that would have been dictated mostly by dogmatic considerations foreign to the ʿUthmânic period cannot be substantiated, and the Shîʿites themselves have never been able to agree on the alleged distortion of the sacred text by their adversaries. Thus, while the Koran does not contain all Muḥammad's revelations, its text—aside from the prayers *sûra* 1, 113, and 114—is completely genuine.

The text is, however, not devoid of variants, which are due only

partly to the imperfections of Arabic writing. The consensus of Muslim learning has since A.D. 934 accepted equal standing for seven systems of readings which, each of them, represented a school tradition based on early authority.[3] The Prophet's (spurious?) saying that the word of God was given to him in seven different ways, *aḥruf*, was interpreted to justify textual variations and at the same time to minimize their importance.

In the Muslim view the Koran contains everything. More systematically put, the Book covers primarily three subjects: *tauḥīd*, literally, declaration of the unity of God, here standing for doctrine, *aḫbár*, histories (of earlier prophets and the like), and *diyânât*, regulations;[4] or, in the formulation of another theologian, *tauḥīd*, *taḏkīr*, exhortation, and *aḥkâm*, law.[5] From another standpoint it could be said that the emphasis on eschatology of the earlier Meccan period shifted, still in Mecca, to prophetology (discussed mostly through the history of previous messengers), and in Muḥammad's later years in Medina, to community organization and law, with day-by-day politics and problems being given fair attention. Within this framework a great variety of topics is touched upon[6] so as to raise the question of the relative importance, or excellence, *faḍl*, as the Muslims prefer to put it, of the individual passages. Theologians like al-Ashʿarī (d. 935) or al-Bâqillânî (d. 1013) point out that all of the Koran, being equally the Word of God, is of equal significance, but others are more in accord with the sentiment of the faithful when they explain that the passages differ with respect to the rank of the subject discussed in them or else because hortatory and doctrinal paragraphs carry a higher reward owing to their effect on the soul.[7]

While the Koran offers the elements which later provided the vantage points for theological system-builders, it does not contain a rounded exposition of the faith. *Sûra* 112 defines the Muslim concept of God, using a formulation obviously designed to combat the half-understood Christian notion:

> Say: "He is Allâh, One,
> Allâh, the Eternal;
> He brought not forth, nor hath He been brought forth;
> Co-equal with Him there hath never been any one."

A more elaborate creed encompassing in fact the whole range of Muḥammad's theological interest is given in *sûra* 4:135:

O ye who believe, believe in God and His Apostle and the Book which He hath sent down to His Apostle and the Scriptures which He hath sent down formerly.

Whosoever denieth God and His Angels and His Books and His Apostles and the Last Day hath strayed far from the Truth.[8]

The Muslim God is developed in contrast, not to say in opposition, to man. His outstanding trait is His omnipotence, His detached arbitrariness. The conflict between a moralistic world order where no action goes unrewarded and a world order reflecting God's unconcerned absolutism remains unresolved. We read: "The recompense of an evil deed is an evil like it" (Koran 42:38). And more explicitly: "Whoever has done an atom's weight of good, shall see it; And whoever has done an atom's weight of evil, shall see it" (Koran 99:7–8). But, on the other hand, it is written: "Thus doth Allâh send astray whom He willeth, and guideth whom He willeth" (Koran 74:34; cf. also 13:27 and 16:95). And what is more: Allâh has "put a seal" on the hearts of the unbelievers that they may not believe.[9] Equally unresolved goes the conflict between God's loving-kindness—"My mercy overcomes My wrath" —and His despotic disdain for man as sharpened by later tradition: "These to heaven, and I care not; these to hell, and I care not."[10] But it should not be forgotten not only that the contradiction is due to underdeveloped logical stringency but that it is, to a degree at least, inherent in the religious experience as such. And Muḥammad knew of the mysterious aloofness and otherness of the divine: "Allâh is the light of the heavens and the earth; His light is like a niche in which is a lamp, the lamp in glass and the glass like a brilliant star, lit from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West whose oil would almost give light even though no fire did touch it; light upon light . . . " (Koran 24:35).[11] At the outset the revelations overflow with images alien to contemporary poetry and reflecting the Prophet's sense of urgency, his exasperation with the obtuse hearts and minds of his countrymen:

> By those that are sent gently [probably: winds],
> And those that come with hurricane blast,
> And those that scatter abroad,
> And those that divide asunder,
> And those that drop reminders,
> As excuse or warning,
> Verily, what ye are promised is going to happen.
>
> So when the stars are blotted out,
> When the heaven is opened,
> When the mountains are reduced to powder,
> When the messengers are given their time,

For what day is the appointment made?
For the Day of Distinction [Koran 77:1-5,7-13].

Verily, they think it far off,
But We think it near at hand.
On the day when the heaven will be like molten metal,
And the mountains will be like wool,

. . . .

They will gaze at each other, the sinner wishing that he might
ransom himself from the punishment of that day by his sons . . . [Koran
70:6-9,11].

Naught, however, will avail them.

Lo, Gehenna has become an ambush,
For the proud transgressors a place of resort,
In which to remain for ages,
Tasting therein neither coolth nor drink,
Except hot water and tears,
A fitting recompense [Koran 78:21-26].

The style of Muḥammad's middle period is best represented
in his tales of former prophets. This is how the story of Adam's
disobedience and fall appears in the Book:

We made a covenant with Adam formerly, but he forgot, and We found not
in him steadiness of purpose./ When We said to the angels: "Do obeisance to
Adam," and they did obeisance, except Iblīs [i.e., Satan], who refused. So We
said: "O Adam, verily this is an enemy to thee and to thy spouse; so let him
not expel you from the Garden, and thou be miserable./ It is thine not to hunger
therein nor to go naked,/ Nor to thirst, nor to be exposed to the sun."/ Then
Satan whispered to him; he said: "O Adam, shall I point thee to the tree of
eternity, and of kingship which grows not old."/ So they ate of it, and their base
parts appeared to them, and they set about sewing upon themselves leaves of
the Garden, and Adam rebelled against his Lord and erred./ Afterwards his
Lord chose him and relented towards him and guided./ He said: "Get ye down
from it together, enemies one to the other; and if there come to you from Me
guidance/ Then whoso followeth My guidance, shall not go astray, and shall
not become miserable./ But if anyone turn from My reminder, narrowness of
life will be his,/ And We shall round him up on the resurrection-day blind."/
He shall say: "O my Lord why hast thou rounded me up blind, though I used to
see clearly?"/ He shall say: "Thus [it is]; Our signs came to thee, and thou
didst forget them; so today thou art forgotten" [Koran 20:114-26].

The story of Noah is told at one time in this wise, with a view
to typifying prophetic experience with recalcitrant man and thus
putting Muḥammad's own difficulties in their true perspective:

We sent Noah to his people, and he said: "O my people, serve Allâh, there is
no god for you other than He; verily I fear for you a punishment of a mighty
day."/ Said the nobility of his people: "Verily we think thou art in manifest

error."/ Said he: "O my people, there is no error in me, but I am a messenger from the Lord of the worlds./ I deliver to you the messages of my Lord, and give you sincere advice; I have knowledge from Allâh which ye have not./ Does it astonish you that a reminder from your Lord should come to you upon a man from amongst yourselves, in order that he may warn you, and that ye may show piety, mayhap mercy will be shown you?"/ But they counted him false; so We rescued him and those with him in the ark, and We drowned those who counted Our signs false; verily they were a blind people [Koran 7:57–62].

The lesson is further driven home by the sequel:

And to Thamûd [We sent] their brother Ṣâliḥ; he said: "O my people, serve Allâh, there is no god for you other than He; there has come to you an Evidence from your Lord; this is the she-camel of Allâh as a sign for you; let her eat in the land of Allâh, and molest her not, lest there seize you a painful punishment."/ . . . / Said the nobility who thought themselves great of his people, to those who were counted weak, to those of them who believed: "Do you know that Ṣâliḥ is commissioned from his Lord?" Said they: "Verily in the message with which he has been sent we are believers."/ Said those who thought themselves great: "Verily in that in which ye have believed, we are unbelievers."/ So they hamstrung the she-camel and disdained the commandment of their Lord, and said: "O Ṣâliḥ, bring upon us what thou promisest us if thou art one of those commissioned."/ So the earthquake seized them, and morning found them in their dwellings lying-prone./ So he turned from them, and said: "O my people, I delivered to you the message of my Lord, and gave you sincere advice, but ye love not the sincere advisers" [Koran 7:71,73–77].

The lawgiver of the later period was faced with the greatest difficulties in view of the state of the language with which he had to operate and also in view of the conflicting stylistic demands of legislation and exhortation.

At times he expresses himself after the fashion of the poets. He recognizes blood revenge by saying: "In retaliation is life for you, O ye of insight." And to commend a conciliatory spirit in settling blood disputes he adds: "Mayhap ye will show piety" (Koran 2:175). Elsewhere Muḥammad falls back on relating Cain's murder of Abel and making Allâh point this moral: "Because of that [incident] We have prescribed [as a law] for the Children of Israel that whoever kills a person otherwise than [in retaliation] for another person, or for causing corruption in the land, shall be as if he had killed the people in a body" (Koran 5:35). The Prophet is averse to retaliation, though willing to admit it under certain circumstances, but he is unable to crystallize his ideas in strictly legal form: "The recompense of an evil deed is an evil like it, so if anyone pardons and makes peace, it rests with Allâh to reward him; verily He loveth not those who do wrong./ But surely if any vindicate themselves after wrong done them, then against such there is no way [to punish]./ There is a way only against such as do wrong to the people, and act oppressively in the land without justification; for such is a punishment painful./ But surely if one patiently endures and forgives, that is one of the determining factors of affairs"

(Koran 42:38–41). At another time he considerably improves on this phrasing, condensing his ideas into one instead of four somewhat diffuse paragraphs: "If ye take vengeance, take it only in the measure that vengeance was taken from you; but, assuredly, if ye endure patiently, it is better for those who patiently endure" (Koran 16:129).[12]

To Muḥammad his revelations were translations into Arabic done by the Lord Himself of sections of the Heavenly Book or —a parallel notion—the Well-Guarded Tablet. The identity of his own message with that given earlier prophets in their respective languages for their peoples was his principal argument for his truthfulness.[13] Muḥammad shares with Mani the distinction of considering himself the last of the prophets; with Montanus, the idea that his revelations were, syllable for syllable, the speech of the Lord Himself.[14] Like his predecessors Muḥammad did not read the Heavenly Book; what Allâh wanted him to divulge he received orally communicated through Gabriel.[15] Major differences between the Judeo-Christian and the Muslim revelations must be due, therefore, to neglect or malicious distortion of their books on the part of Jews and Christians, an idea already used by Justin Martyr, Marcion, and Mani. Many books existed. Wahb b. al-Munabbih (d. 728) had read 72 of them.[16] But quantitatively their contents were not equal. It was said that God sent down 104 books but later distributed the knowledge they contained among only four: Torah, Gospel, Psalms, and Koran; still later He deposited all the wisdom of Torah, Gospel, and Psalms in the Koran (so as to render perusal of the other books unnecessary).[17] On the other hand, there are verses revealed to Moses but not to Muḥammad.[18] The *basmala* had not been revealed to any prophet before Muḥammad except for Solomon.[19] The text of the Book being pre-existent, Joseph could see three verses of the Koran[20] as a warning sign when tempted by Potiphar's wife (Koran 12:24).[21] As the Koran was done into Arabic by Allâh, the general feeling against translating it is understandable.[22]

More difficult to account for is Muḥammad's view of the *nasḫ*, the abrogation of one, and its replacement by another, verse. It has been suggested that the *nasḫ* echoes the New Testament idea of the abrogation of Old Testament law (Eph. 2:15, Col. 2:14),[23] but the koranic concept seems somewhat more mechanical. Muslim scholars have given a great deal of attention to the subject but have never put the problem on the proper metaphysical level by discussing the possibility of change in a pre-existent text. The

Jews are said to consider the *nasḫ* mere caprice. Actually, however, it is due to God's taking into account the element of change in making long-term stipulations. In this His motivation is *taisīr* (or, *taḫfīf*), the lightening of man's burden.[24] But at the same time the abrogation of individual verses has to be seen in parallel with the abrogation of revealed codes by later prophets. In this sense, "Islam abrogates all previous codes of which it is the perfection. . . . If we consider the formation of man from his pre-embryonic beginning to his full stature we see that each progressive form abrogated its predecessor. Similarly man progressed from code to code till the perfection of all codes was reached."[25] The Shī'a developed the concept of *badā'*, "the intervention of new circumstances which bring about the alteration of an earlier divine determination,"[26] basing it in part on the *nasḫ* which, in turn, it serves to explain. The Mu'tazilite, al-Ḥayyāṭ (ninth century), restricted the *badā'* to God's commands that might take into consideration moral changes in those affected, eliminating the possibility of any revision of the predetermined or at least foreknown course of history.[27] But nobody felt too comfortable with the notion.

The Koran is Muḥammad's evidentiary miracle. Its inimitability has been accepted dogma since the fourth/tenth century. The uniqueness, *i'jāz*, of the Book is seen variously in its prophesying of future events, the information about otherwise unknown incidents of the past, the fact that nobody rivaled it despite the Prophet's challenge, and the unprecedentedness and surpassing excellence of its style.

The Koran as the word of God posed the problem of the relation of God to His speech—a special instance of the general problem of the divine attributes. In analogy to the solution adopted by Christianity for the question of the relation of the Logos to the Father, orthodox Islam came to regard God's speech as uncreated, that is to say, as an eternal attribute of Allāh inherent in His essence. Rationalistic criticism saw the danger of admitting a second entity next to, or even within, God and rejected the uncreated Koran as "association," *shirk* (polytheism). It is not God's Speech as an eternal quality that is heard by the Prophet but a speech created *ad hoc* that conveys the expression of the divine will. It is in this sense that the Mu'tazila regarded the Book as created. Orthodoxy, supported by the popular view, succeeded in having the uncreated Koran accepted by Ash'arite scholasticism, along with the mythological motive of the Preserved Tablet on which it is written. The

enthusiastic logic of the *credo quia absurdum* extended the concept of uncreatedness to allow the individual recitation of the Koran and even the physical copy of the Book in the hand of the believer to be accounted uncreate.

Muḥammad's successors never abandoned the ideal of building Islam, or perhaps the state of the believers, as a community under God. With the Prophet's death Allâh had ceased His direct rule, but the Koran preserved His major injunctions and thus became the unquestioned basis of the religious as well as the sociopolitical order. The distinction of the two orders is justified as a matter of interpretative convenience only—for nothing could run counter more directly to the holist conception of Islam whose very purpose is the integration of every moment, of every aspect and segment, of life in a texture of divine regulations. Prayer and taxation, food and international relations—each and every personal and collective activity was to be performed in accordance with the will of God as expressed by revelation. The very grandeur of the aspiration brought home to the community the necessity to supplement the Book.

The Koran was incomplete as a law code, a political manual, a directory of manners, and even as a *summa theologiae*. So the faithful fell back on what Muḥammad had said and done as a private person, that is when he was not voicing the words of God. Where Muḥammad's precept or example could not be established, the ways of his companions or of the next generation were looked to for guidance. A vast body of traditions, *ḥadîth*, collected, which by some came to be accepted as superior to Holy Writ itself; the *sunna*, the received custom of the community, could not be overruled by the revealed text. In this manner the believers secured to themselves the freedom of development under God, obtaining *ex post* sanctions for the views and mores of the day and for the solution of their intellectual and political problems. The growing belief in the Prophet's miraculous powers made possible the attribution to him of predictions reflecting the conditions of the reporter's time and thus the maintenance throughout the ages of direct contact with the divinely appointed source of authority.

Extensive supplementation, as offered by the *ḥadîth*, was paralleled by the intensive supplementation of koranic exegesis. Any movement, political or theological, found its legitimation in the Book. So the study of the text had to go beyond explaining obscure or contradictory passages; *tafsîr*, explication, was followed by

ta'wîl, interpretation. The farther removed a body of opinion would find itself from letter and spirit of the Koran, the bolder and the more arbitrary its method of *ta'wîl*. At-Tustarî (d. 896) proclaims the theory of the fourfold sense of Holy Writ.[28] Ibn Taimiyya (d. 1328) points out that misinterpretation has regard either to the *madlûl*, the *demonstrandum*, as is the case when rationalist theologians find their teachings in the Book, or to the *dalîl*, the *via demonstrandi*, as when certain mystics, preachers, and legists derive correct conclusions from Revelation misread.[29] Nasafî (d. 1142) insists that Scripture is to be understood in its literal meaning. Leaving this for the "inner" sense is heresy.[30] Taftazânî (d. 1389) considers disintegration of the Law to be the purpose of looking for the "inner" meaning; but he approves the conviction of those who, while accepting the literal, believe in a second, anagogical sense of the text compatible with its "outward" reading.[31] But the soundest methodological principles could not suppress allegorical, numerological, or simply partisan *ta'wîl* of the ever more venerated Book, to whose authority everybody made pretense to cling.

The professional *mufassir*, explainer of the Koran, needed a wide range of scientific information—lexicographical, grammatical, stylistic—but also a command of the sciences of the readings of the text (*qirâ'ât*), the occasions of revelation (*asbâb an-nuzûl*), the abrogated passages, the principles of law, *hadîth*, and so on. The study of the Book unquestionably spurred and channeled research activity and helped develop certain branches of scientific endeavor. Rationalism analyzed and criticized the legends of former prophets much in the spirit of the European eighteenth century but perhaps with more submissiveness to the koranic revelation itself. A *modus vivendi* is sought for the accommodation of nonkoranic sciences. Muṭahhar al-Maqdisî (*fl.* 966), for example, not unlike some early Christian defenders of the art, asserts the validity of astrology, before its abolition by Islam, and suggests that successful astrologers may have gained their insight from one of the books of God without, of course, sharing in that knowledge of the hidden that God has reserved for Himself.[32] But, on the whole, koranic and "secular" science never coalesced.

The Muslim sermon, generally brief, eschatological, and attuned to the feeling of fear of the Hereafter, makes ample use of koranic quotations. Warning and threat are couched largely in imagery developed on the scriptural model. The emotional effect of

Koran recitation must have been extremely strong, especially among the mystically inclined, as we hear of koranic lines provoking ecstasy and even swoons or death. The Prophet himself is described as being overcome by feeling on hearing certain lines recited to him.[33] The question was debated whether it was allowable to listen to the Koran for the sake of experiencing ecstasy[34] and decided affirmatively, ostensibly on sacred precedent but actually because of the complete permeation of the devotional life with koranic wording and associations.

By giving the Arabs a Book, God elevated them to the rank of the other scripturaries; by giving them the final revelation of the Koran He lifted them above the others. Since the Hellenistic period the possession of a revealed book had been the mark of most new religious groups. In Muḥammad's world the primitive polytheist alone lacked this distinction. Small wonder that adherence or non-adherence to a Book became for Muḥammad as well as for later Islam the great divide between groups such as could be legally dealt with and integrated in the Muslim state and such as could be given only the choice of conversion or death. The Manichaeans were probably the only scripturaries not to win recognition as a protected community.

Muḥammad knew that he was written of in the earlier books (Koran 6:156). In fact, Jesus had announced him by his name, Aḥmad (Koran 61:6). When Christians and Jews denied the claim, extensive polemics developed on the interpretation of biblical, especially Old Testament, passages. Generally speaking, most Christian-Muslim controversy during the Middle Ages consisted of pitting one book against the other, refuting the earlier revelations by means of the later, or disproving the claim of the later to finality if not rejecting their acceptability altogether. Civic dispute within Islam used koranic passages to identify a leader with a predicted personality or to demonstrate the validity of a political program. The Book held the key to all problems in a society in which the reformer fought for the restitution of its original perfection rather than to introduce innovations. Despite, or perhaps owing to, the varying and conflicting uses to which the Book was put, it became a factor in unifying the Near and Middle East. Down to the present it has provided a pervasive substratum in the intellectual life of the region and has been the most effective single factor in maintaining the supremacy over the rising vernaculars of a universally accepted standard Arabic.

This could hardly have happened if the Koran had not been a remarkable literary achievement. While employing the rhymed prose, *saj‛*, accepted by his contemporaries for religious utterance, Muḥammad succeeded in presenting Arabic literature with something entirely new. Not only did the Koran discuss many a subject never before presented in organized Arabic speech, but it introduced new imagery, new turns of phrase, and, in many instances, new words to convey new concepts. It was the first great monument of Arabic prose. Not without reason was its literary form among the principal arguments for its miraculous character. There is no doubt that the Muslim theorists exaggerated the beauty of individual passages for dogmatic reasons, that they have strained explanations to justify syntactical weaknesses, and that not infrequently their praise of the text betrays a prejudged case; yet they were right in stressing its inimitability. Any replica—there were some attempts in this direction—was bound to be a shallow failure. As time wore on, the Muslim theory of inspiration barred any formal criticism of the Koran. Where Christian doctrine presents the human writer of a biblical book as a free agent under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who preserves his own style and mentality as well as his own ideas and methods of historiography, Islamic theology makes Muḥammad a mere instrument chosen to convey a text whose precise formulation was taught him by revelation and to which he was permitted to make no contribution beyond that of keeping it letter-perfect. This difference in the interpretation of the nature of a sacred or revealed scripture largely accounts for the absence in Islam of that freedom with which, among others, Saint Augustine discusses the stylistic peculiarities of the New Testament. "The Christian had his scriptures in translation and had not been taught to look upon the original as actual discourse in the Lord's own tongue. Besides, the Bible could not escape being judged against the Greco-Roman literary tradition while the Koran stood out in Arabic literature as an unprecedented phenomenon for the critical valuation of which no tried standard existed. Therefore, in Christianity, the ready admission of the formal imperfection of Scripture."[35] It must, however, be remembered that, in certain periods, Christianity insisted on the inspired character even of the punctuation of the Hebrew Old Testament.[36] Koranic phrasing gained in influence on Arabic literary prose. Insertions of brief koranic passages in poetry and prose became highly popular. Out of a feeling of reverence for the sacred text, the Mâlikite legists disapproved

of this figure of *iqtibás* or, at best, admitted it only in prose.[37] In the arts, koranic lines were widely used in ornamentation, and koranic situations were frequently treated in miniature painting.

Veneration for the Book was unbounded.[38] Tradition knows that "the Koran is dearer to God than heaven and earth and what is in them."[39] Ghazzâlî says: "Therefore the verses of the Koran, in relation to intelligence, have the value of sunlight in relation to the eyesight, to wit, it is by this sunlight that the act of seeing is accomplished."[40] It is not the only book that commands the reverence of the Islamic world, but Buhârî's (d. 870) *Ṣaḥíḥ*, Qâḍî ʿIyâḍ's (d. 1149) *Shifâʾ*, and Juzûlî's (d. 1465) *Dalâʾil al-ḥairât* never attained to anything approximating the Koran's significance for education. It is true that in its best period Islam fostered types of education that were largely "secular," philosophical-scientific and philological-literary; but by and large, and more particularly after the consolidation of orthodoxy in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, education centered more and more on the Koran.

The power inherent in the Word of God leads to a belief in its medical potency. The use of the apotropaic *sûras* and the names of God is contrasted as spiritual medicine with the physical.[41] Tradition is rich in sayings like: "In the *Fâtiḥa* [*sûra* 1] is a remedy for every disease"; or, "Make use of two cures, honey and the Koran."[42] The Prophet himself is represented as recommending and practicing this kind of medical magic. The Koran prohibits magic expressly (Koran 5:92); nevertheless its very text has come to be used in the preparation of talismans, in the wording of incantations,[43] in divination by numbers, and in the *sortes Coranicae* (divining by the first text that meets the eye on opening the Book),[44] to mention but a few of the techniques of Hellenistic magic that found themselves accepted throughout the Islamic world. In fact, popular sentiment justifies the unorthodox attitude by the pronunciation of the name of Allâh during the rites as well as by inclusion in the formulary of incantations of His own words as contained in the Koran.[45] In the same spirit the Koran will serve on occasion "as a sort of vocabulary for the language of dreams; as a ship signifies safety, because the word "save" is used in the Koran in connection with Noah's ark."[46]

By entering into every intellectual and emotional aspiration, on whatever level, the Koran has provided the many sects and nations of Islam with a large area of shared understandings. Such common ground does not prevent fission, but it does offer a large

measure of conceptual and imaginative homogeneity and a universally accepted framework for value judgments. The Book guarantees a measure of mutual understandability, if not understanding, and a spiritual refuge in which to recover from the strain of reality and to gain strength for yet another attempt to organize this refractory world under God.

NOTES

1. Cf. J. Horovitz, *Koranische Untersuchungen* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1926), p. 72, n. 2, who discusses Koran 41:44 and 11:1 in this context.

2. For the presumable reasons why the Prophet did not prepare an edition of his revelations and, again, for the characteristics of the first actual collections, private and official, cf. R. Blachère, *Introduction au Coran* (Paris, 1947), pp. 22–70. For the textual history of the Koran one may now conveniently consult A. Jeffery, *The Qur'ân as Scripture* (New York, 1952), pp. 90–97.

3. For details, cf. Jeffery, *op. cit.*, pp. 98–100. Abû 'l-'Alâ' al-Ma'arrî (d. 1057) appears to poke fun at the science of the *qirâ'ât* when he introduces into Paradise a snake that had lived with three outstanding readers and has her report on certain *variae lectiones; Risâlat al-ghufrân*, ed. Bint ash-Shâṭi' (Cairo, 1950), pp. 288–90; see also the summary by R. A. Nicholson, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (hereafter *JRAS*), 1900, p. 715. The snake is mentioned, but the discussion of the koranic text omitted, in K. Kîlânî's text (Cairo, 1343/1925), I, 226–27.

4. So Ṭabarî (d. 923), quoted by Suyûṭî (d. 1505), *Al-Itqân fî 'ulûm al-Qur'ân* (Cairo, 1318/1900), II, 129⁶.

5. Abû Bakr b. al-'Arabî (d. 1151); *ibid.*, II, 128^ult–29^1.[1]

6. Cf. the enumeration by Suyûṭî, *ibid.*, II, 129^11–30^12.

7. Cf. *ibid.*, II, 156–60. Ibn Taimiyya (d. 1328), too, accepted what H. Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines . . . de . . . b. Taimîya* (Cairo, 1939), pp. 171 and 232, calls a *hiérarchisation* within the Word of God.

8. *Mohammedanism*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (London, New York, Toronto, 1949), p. 53.

9. Frequent references; cf. D. B. Macdonald, *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1913–34) (hereafter *EI*), I, 304*b*.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 305*b*.

11. The translation throughout is that of R. Bell, *The Qur'ân* (Edinburgh, 1937–39).

12. Cf. G. E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam. A Study in Cultural Orientation* (2d ed.; Chicago, 1953), p. 87.

13. Cf. the Talmudic idea that the Torah was revealed simultaneously in different languages; I. Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der islamischen Koranauslegung* (Leiden, 1920), p. 37. For the ideas of the Muslims concerning the Old and New Testaments, cf. Goldziher, *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, XXXII (1878), 341–87. The notion of a prophet's being sent specifically to his own people to address them in their own language may be found adumbrated in Ezek. 3:5–6, where, however, no general rule is formulated.

14. For Montanus, cf. Jeffery, *op. cit.*, p. 85, n. 34.

15. Cf. Dan. 8:16, 9:21; Luke 1:19. The Gnostic Marcosians identify the Logos with Gabriel; cf. W. Bousset, *Kyrios Christos* (Göttingen, 1913), p. 377. The false prophet, Ṭulaiḥa, too, was connected with Gabriel; cf. Th. Nöldeke and F. Schwally, *Geschichte des Qorans* (2d ed.; Leipzig, 1909–38), I, 21, n. 1.

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[1] See note (xv) of appendix.

16. Yâqût, *Irshâd*, ed. D. S. Margoliouth (London and Leiden, 1907–27), VII, 232; cf. also Bisṭâmî, *Manâhij* (Constantinople, 1299), p. 100. Wahb b. Munabbih (pronounced: Sîdî 'l-Wahhâb b. Munabbih) is one of the most revered saints of Tlemcen; cf. E. Doutté, *Notes sur l'Islam maghribin. Les marabouts* (Paris, 1900), p. 66 and p. 66, n. 7 (the book actually is an extract from the *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, vols. XL and XLI).

17. *Itqân*, II, 126³⁻⁴. *Ibid.*, II, 106¹⁸⁻²², Suyûṭî quotes a fuller form of the tradition, which ends: "Then He deposited the knowledge of the Koran in the *Fâtiḥa* [*Sûra* 1]. So he who knows its exegesis knows the exegesis of all revealed books." Ibn Qutaiba (d. 889), *Kitâb al-ma'ârif*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Göttingen, 1850), p. 27, specifies that, of the 104 books, 50 were revealed to Seth (Shîth), 30 to Idrîs, 20 to Ibrâhîm, then the Torah to Moses, the *Zabûr* to Dâ'ûd, the *Injîl* to 'Îsâ, and the *Furqân* to Muḥammad.

18. An example, *Itqân*, I, 39⁰ᵘˡᵗ–40¹.

19. *Ibid.*, I, 39.

20. Koran 82:10–12, 10:82, and 13:33; some add 17:34.

21. *Itqân*, I, 40.

22. Of the four orthodox law schools only the Ḥanafite was sufficiently realistic to admit the legitimacy of translation. The expedient of preparing an interlinear version of the Book was used in Iran at a comparatively early time. The Museum of Antiquities (*Mûze-yi Îrân-i Bâstân*) in Teheran has on exhibit (in Vitrine No. 79) a codex of the Koran with an interlinear Persian translation that must be dated as far back as *ca.* A.D. 1200.

23. Nöldeke and Schwally, *op. cit.*, I, 52; II, 3, n. 2.

24. E.g., *Itqân*, II, 20.

25. Shahrastânî (d. 1153), *Kitâb nihâyat al-iqdâm fî 'ilm al-kalâm*, ed. trans. A. Guillaume (Oxford, 1934), pp. 499, 502–3 (trans., pp. 158–59). D. M. Donaldson, *Studies in Muslim Ethics* (London, 1953), pp. 48–52, has been the latest scholar to discuss the *nasḫ;* he quotes Shahrastânî at some length on p. 52.

26. Goldziher, *EI*, I, 550*b*.

27. *Kitâb al-intiṣâr*, ed. H. S. Nyberg (Cairo, 1925), pp. 127–29; noted by A. S. Tritton, *Muslim Theology* (London, 1947), p. 156.

28. L. Massignon, *La passion d'al-Ḥallâj* (Paris, 1922), p. 704; for its Christian antecedents, cf. present work, p. 162. The justification of the "extreme" *allegoresis* of some sectarian *ta'wîl* is to be found in the sect's cosmology. Thus H. Corbin, in his "Étude préliminaire" to his and M. Mo'în's edition of Nâṣir-i Ḥusrav's *Jâmi' al-ḥikmatain* (Teheran and Paris, 1953), p. 65, points out that, in the world view of the Ismâ'îlî, "il y a une similitude de structure, une homologie entre plusieurs univers; plérome céleste de l'*Ibdâ'* l'existenciation éternelle"; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 114–16, "macrocosme de l'individualité humaine, mésocosme ou monde intermédiaire que constitue la sodalité ésoterique (*ahl-i bâṭin*), le cosmos sacré ou *hiérocosmos* de la Religion éternelle (*Dîn-i ḥaqq*) . . . . Et c'est cette homologie qui est principe et motivation de la méthode proprement ismaélienne d'interprétation, de son acte même de Comprendre qui est désigné comme '*ta'wîl*'."

29. Quoted with approval, *Itqân*, II, 178. Ibn Taimiyya's contemporary, the Egyptian *muḥtasib*, Ibn al-Uḫuwwa (d. 1329), has this to say concerning independent interpretation: "A man with pretensions to learning who introduces doctrines contrary to *ijmâ'* must be stopped and reprimanded. If he persists in the offense it is the duty of the ruling secular power to protect the faith. If an interpreter of the Qur'ân deduces from it allegories which may delude men from the clear revelation and lead them to secret heresy, or if a reporter of tradition on his own authority transmits traditions abhorrent to men or supports some allegorical

interpretation with such traditions, the *muḥtasib* must denounce him and prevent him from continuing the offence" (*Maʿālim al-qurba fī aḥkām al-ḥisba*, ed. with abstract of contents by R. Levy [London, 1938], pp. 43–44; p. 9 of abstract).

30. *ʿAqāʾid*, quoted in *Itqān*, II, 184[25–26].

31. *Ibid.*, ll. 26–30.

32. *Badʾ al-ḥalq*, ed. C. Huart (Paris, 1899–1919), III, 47–48.

33. Ghazzālī, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm ad-dīn* (Būlāq, 1289/1872), II, 274; trans. D. B. Macdonald, *JRAS*, 1901, pp. 733–34. For the extravagant emotions stirred by religious messages in modern times, cf. the examples offered by Jeffery, *op. cit.*, pp. 84–85.

34. Cf. Sarrāj (d. 988), *Kitāb al-lumaʿ fī ʾt-taṣawwuf*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (Leiden and London, 1914), pp. 280–81.

35. G. E. von Grunebaum, *A Tenth-Century Document of Arab Literary Theory and Criticism* (Chicago, 1950), pp. xiv–xv.

36. Cf., e.g., R. Strothmann, *Der Kultus der Zaiditen* (Strassburg, 1912), pp. 26–27, where he analyzes the *Helvetische Consensus-Formel* of 1675.

37. On the dispute, cf. *Itqān*, I, 113–14.

38. The earliest mention of the oath by the Koran may go back to Shāfiʿī (d. 820), who refers to it when talking of the provincial judges; cf. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien* (Halle a/S., 1888–90), II, 255, n. 2.

39. *Itqān*, II, 151[25].

40. *Mishkāt al-anwār*, trans. W. H. T. Gairdner (London, 1924), p. 52.

41. *Itqān*, II, 165–66.

42. *Ibid.*, II, 163.

43. Cf. E. Doutté, *Magie et religion dans l'Afrique du Nord* (Algiers, 1909), pp. 120–27.

44. D. S. Margoliouth, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, IV, 818a. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (d. 1377), *Travels*, ed. C. Defrémery and B. R. Sanguinetti (Paris, 1853–58), IV, 106–7, records a political decision taken by an Indian ruler on the basis of a *sortilegium* carried out by himself; cf. *ibid.*, IV, 207, for a *sortilegium* with a view to reaching a personal decision on the part of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa. His contemporary, the theologian Ibn al-Ḥājj (d. 1336), strongly disapproves of the practice; cf. his *Mudḥal* (Cairo, 1348/1929), I, 278.

45. Cf. C. H. Becker, *Islamstudien* (Leipzig, 1924–32), I, 372–74.

46. D. S. Margoliouth, *op. cit.*, IV, 818a. A good idea of the extent to which the Koran is woven into the life of the believer can be gained from the article of J. Jomier, "La place du Coran dans la vie quotidienne en Égypte," *Revue IBLA* (Tunis), XV (1952), 131–66. Cf. also C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mekka in the Latter Part of the 19th Century* (Leiden, 1931), p. 198, for the attitude toward the Koran of the general public.

THE SPIRIT OF ISLAM AS SHOWN
IN ITS LITERATURE

I

THE SEARCH for reflections of the spirit of Islam in literature will be meaningful only when it is interpreted as the search for such character traits as are readily derivable from or co-ordinable with essential elements of Islamic doctrines or outlook. Two methodological difficulties immediately come to mind: for one thing, safeguards have to be taken against that vicious circle which finds the scholar defining the nature of Islam from the evidence of Muslim literature which evidence he then employs to demonstrate the effect Islam has had on the literary production of its adherents; and, for the other, the problem must be considered in the same light as the kindred quest for a Christian or a Muslim philosophy. In what sense can it be said that a denominationally determined philosophy exists? In so far as problems and tools of philosophical inquiry are based on universal human concerns the concept of a particular type of philosophical investigation, to be dubbed Muslim or Christian, is hardly relevant. The concept can be defended only when it is understood as implying the rational justification and interpretation of certain data that are peculiar to, say, Islam or Christianity and which were originally received by transrational means. Is it, then, meaningful to speak of an Islamic literature, beyond using "Islamic" as a convenient comprehensive term for the several peoples which at one time or another professed Islam?

It is obvious that the concept of literature itself needs a more precise definition. Nothing would be gained if it were to be stated that theological, ethical, or political writings are in tune with the religious principles of the writers and thus, in the case of Muslims, reflect the spirit of Islam. The concept of literature will have to be restricted to *belles-lettres* or, better still, to any work or parts thereof which were composed with a definite view to producing or creating a work of art—in other words, to works in the origin of which an aesthetic aspiration has been active. Once literature is thus confined to poetry, ornate prose, a great deal of what the

Arabs would consider *adab*, certain sections of historical works, and pages like the rhymed prose introduction to Muqaddasī's geography,[1] the question can be attacked; and it can be approached, it would seem, on four different levels:

a) Interest may be focused on *content*.

The discussion of themes introduced by Islam can be traced. Echoes or even expositions of Muslim doctrine and Muslim ethics may be encountered. Some of the imagery will be recognized as being descended from koranic phraseology or from the poignant dicta of the early *ḥadīth*. Although, strangely enough, there has been a certain time lag between the acceptance of Islam and the use of Islamic ideas, metaphors, and allusions by the converted, it took less than two generations to impregnate permanently Arabic literature with themes and modes of expression that were more or less directly associated with religious motifs. It is hardly necessary to call attention to the development in the later Middle Ages of a specifically religious poetry, as represented, for instance, by poems in praise of the prophet Muḥammad and by comparable endeavors to glorify certain saints. Viewed in this manner, the spirit of Islam is traceable almost everywhere in the literatures of the Muslim territories, yet it remains questionable whether this observation contributes in any way significantly to our understanding of the relation between Islam as a religious and sociopolitical system and the literary productions of the believers.

b) Attention may be transferred from content to the *outward form*.

The preference of the "Islamic" literatures for poetry and ornate prose leaps to the eye. The Koran, one might argue, provides the outstanding example of an extensive composition in rhymed prose. Nevertheless it would be difficult to insist that the universal predilection for the *oratio vincta* (bound forms) could be connected with the model set by the Holy Book. In fact, it is only too obvious that the preference for poetry and rhymed prose is rooted in the pre-Islamic Arabic tradition and was taken up and developed in scribal circles that were in no way inspired by specifically Islamic considerations. Thus the tendency toward poetry, in preference to prose, may be called Islamic only in so far as Arabism and Islam coincide to a certain extent both from the point of view of historical fact and from that habitually professed by the average believer. Better still, the tradition may be termed "Islamic" because Islam has adopted the Arabic linguistic and literary tradition as its prin-

cipal means of self-representation. As the language of revelation, Arabic has some qualities of a sacred language; as the tradition of the Prophet's countrymen, the pre-Islamic literary tradition—although emphatically secular—has become authoritative, and its authority is all the more accepted as it provides an indispensable key to the lexicographical understanding of revelation itself. This early identification of Arabism and Islam did not, however, rigidify the tradition of the literary form to the extent of rendering it completely unresponsive to innovation. For with the rise of the cultural prestige of Iranian Islam, the Persian modifications and enrichments of this basically Arabic tradition are generally adopted and in a sense identified as a natural and a typical mode of Islamic self-expression. It is the aesthetic attraction of its limited novelty which led to the integration of the Persian contribution into what the Islamic world at large would consider authoritative or standard form. So at this level it again remains an open question whether it is at all legitimate to attempt a co-ordination of the literary habits of "Muslim" literature with essential structural traits of Islam.

c) If one turns to the *inner form*—that is to say, to the consideration of essential structural features and basic aspirations that are peculiar to the literary tradition of Islamic peoples, the situation changes somewhat.

(1) It has often been observed by Westerners that Arabic literary works are characterized, not to say disfigured, by a certain incoherence or discreteness in composition. More fairly put, an exclusive attention seems to be given to the individual verse, phrase, or paragraph, at the expense of the consistent layout of the whole. The Arab critics themselves have time and again demonstrated that the value of a poem to them would depend on the perfection of its individual lines. The critic encourages improved formulation of a traditional motif as a worthy goal of the poet, and frequently improved rendition is tantamount to a more concise one. Authors of prose works frequently profess their anxiousness to forestall a flagging of the reader's attention by quick shifts from one subject to another, or by a somewhat brusque transition from seriousness to jest; and they do not, by and large, concern themselves with maintaining the unity of their original or principal theme throughout a book.[2] On the contrary, they seem to have taken a distinct delight in allowing themselves to be led away and astray by their associations, and the public appears to have been well satisfied with

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this procedure. It may be said perhaps that Arabic literature operates on a span of attention which is much shorter than that presupposed by Western literature.

It may be tentatively and somewhat hesitatingly suggested that there exists a certain psychological affinity between this leaping from topic to topic, these momentary shifts of attention and mood, and the occasionalistic world view which dominates Muslim theology and scholastic philosophy. It is well known that, for example, Ash'arism, especially as developed by Bâqillânî (d. 1013), sees time as a discontinuous sequence of time atoms. God re-creates the world in each time atom but only for its duration. Certain thinkers have been careful to stress the nonreality in terms of time of the intervals between the individual time atoms. Nonetheless, it is incontrovertible that Bâqillânî's world is discrete, depending on continuous re-creation, and consequently not structured in terms of a self-directing regularity—this world will possess duration but neither continuity nor predictable "developmental" direction (although its end has been disclosed by revelation). At the end of the Middle Ages, Jâmî (d. 1492) summarizes the doctrine of the "moment":

> The universe consists of accidents pertaining to a single substance, which is the Reality underlying all existences. This universe is changed and renewed unceasingly at every moment and every breath. Every instant one universe is annihilated and another resembling it takes its place. . . . In consequence of this rapid succession, the spectator is deceived into the belief that the universe is a permanent existence. . . . Thus it never happens that the Very Being is revealed for two successive moments under the guise of the same phenomenon.[3]

This outlook expresses itself in many ways. We find definitions of faith as the sum of good deeds; of man, as consisting of atoms and accidents; of a body, as an assembly of accidents.[4] This occasionalism was developed with a view to safeguarding God's autocratic majesty in terms of His full independence from law and obligation, even self-imposed. Thus it may be said that the trend toward viewing the world as discontinuous and, again, of concentrating on detail and incident rather than coherence and rounded composition is connected with the very core of the Islamic experience. In this fashion one may co-ordinate, not genetically but in terms of affinity, the literature and the philosophical and theological doctrines of Islam, and one would perhaps be justified in seeing in this outlook on literature a specifically Islamic phenomenon.

(2) In deference to the Arabic tradition, the literary theory

of the Islamic peoples does not provide for fiction. The Arab critics, however rich their conceptual tools, did not develop the concepts of plot and action. "It is a rather strange fact that Arabic literature, so rich in anecdotal material, so eager to seize upon the unusual word or deed, never did seriously turn toward the large-scale narrative or the drama. Except for parables and short stories, many of which are borrowings from foreign literatures or more or less accurate retracings of true incidents, the Arab Muslim disdained literary invention."[5] In fact, wherever possible the story is presented as a report, the invention as an actual happening. In this aversion to letting oneself be caught by the urges of imagination, in this anxiety to remain within the bounds of the factual and the real, a correspondence to certain attitudes concerning man which Islam inculcated from its very beginnings may be divined. In its jealousy of the omnipotence of the Lord, which is most impressively demonstrated by His being the one and only Creator, the new faith was very careful to deny man any powers that might even by a purely verbal *quid pro quo*, induce a misconception of man's innate gifts and hence of his position in relation to Allâh.

Poetical production was judged on criteria suggested by a peculiar moral realism. In an often quoted passage from the so-called "Sûra of the Poets," those poets are berated in a context which tends to render suspect the very source of their inspiration.

The pre-Islamic poet was thought to be under the direct influence of a demon and is on occasion represented as compelled to write by the brute force of his *jinn* or *shaiṭân*. But the necessity to maintain a precise distinction between the inspiration of the Prophet and that of the poets prevented the sublimation of the early idea of poetry as a gift or imposition emanating from a nonhuman power after the manner in which, among the Greeks, Plato came to see in the poet the autonomous interpreter of the divine afflatus.[6]

The Koran relegates the poet definitely to a questionable position. "Shall I tell you upon whom the satans come down?—They come down upon every liar guilty.—They listen, but most of them speak falsely.—And the poets—them follow the beguiled,—Seest thou not how they rove in every valley,—And that they say [in verse] what they do not do?"[7]

The theological inadmissability of human creativeness was supported by the uncertainty of the distinction in the general consciousness between creation, artistic and intellectual, and the true *creatio ex nihilo*. Taking its inspiration from a legend that had been received into the apocryphal Arabic Gospel of the Infancy, the Koran (3:44 and 5:110) depicts Jesus as "creating figures like birds from clay . . . and then breathing upon them so that they become birds," by the

permission of God. The artist as a shaper of forms is felt to be in rivalry with
the Lord. On Judgment Day the makers of figures will be asked to inhale life
into their works; but they will fail and be consigned to eternal punishment.[8]

Although in these two instances, the tendency to discreteness and
the aversion to fiction, an affinity between literary and religious
attitude will be rather readily discerned, there arises immediately
a difficulty of a different kind, for it is evident that the Persians
deviate to a not inconsiderable extent from the direction set by the
Arab-Islamic tradition. Neo-Persian literature does have coherency
and extensive composition, and it also does admit fiction or at
least fictional patterns through which moral and religious truths
are presented. The Persian epics are lengthy, well-planned works,
for the most part re-treatments of motifs taken over from older
Persian literature. There is an unmistakable joy in the narration
of those semihistorical incidents.[9] The epic tale is clearly and con-
sistently structured and, in spite of the fact that the very length
of some epics makes it rather difficult for the poet to maintain a
strict and unified line of composition, the poet keeps control of
his material despite the various digressions and excursuses in which
he indulges. The poet does not refrain from inventing new tales or,
at least, from so completely reshaping inherited ones that the
question of originality becomes a very subtle one. The religious epic
itself, which one might presume would be least subjected to en-
croachments upon the Arab-Muslim tradition, actually shows the
keenest originality in providing fictionlike and actionlike frames
for psychological developments, such as the ascent of the soul to
union with God. In fact, anecdotes, whose pretense to historicity
is of the most tenuous kind, are the preferred means to illustrate
teachings of mystical and moralistic intent.

In this manner one is suddenly confronted by the larger problem
of the over-all relation between "Islamic" civilization and the local
cultures with which it has established contact and which, on the
level of official theology and science, it appears to have more or
less completely submerged. The situation that obtains in the litera-
ture of the Persians and of those Muslim nations that have followed
the Persian cultural lead documents the fact that in certain im-
portant aspects of intellectual life the Islamic impulse had to ex-
press itself through the local tradition; one might almost say that
it had to reconstitute, even eliminate, relevant parts of its own
essence for which significant traits of the local tradition would then
be substituted. In this manner Persian form developments, mystical

poems of a peculiar type, and, in certain countries, even fiction, were accepted from the Persian tradition as integral parts of Islamic cultural productivity.

It is true that the authoritative character of Arabic as the sacred language as well as the authoritative character of many of the books written in Arabic helped to maintain the cultural superiority or, at least, the superior prestige of the Arabic literary tradition within the whole of Islam. Also, its priority in time over against, for instance, the influential neo-Persian literary tradition, contributed toward securing its position. On the other hand, the local language usually persisted on the *belles-lettres* level, all the more so perhaps as the official Islamic attitude toward those *belles-lettres* was one of disregard, not to say disdain. Nationalistic movements as early as the ninth century engaged in bitter and often unfair criticism of the Arabic language and its literature. This fight of the Islamic or Islamized nations for their self-respect in terms of the literary values they produced or denied naturally made the Arab attitude toward their tradition even more rigorously conservative than it had already become, for the simple reason that it provided the clue to the understanding of the Holy Book. As a result, literary discussion of theology and philosophy and, in general, any presentation of theoretical matter tend to adhere much more strictly to the Islamic pattern as evolved in Arabic-speaking territories than to that type of literary endeavor which is informed by the tendency to self-expression, however limited by the conventions of the day. It is unquestionably its emotional root which has rendered possible the infiltration of specifically Persian characteristics into the religious poetry of the Muslim mystics.[10]

d) The *attitude toward* and *expectations from literature* may be considered for affinities with characteristically Muslim traits.

Arabic and Persian literature as well as the official literature of the nations carrying on the Arabic or Persian tradition are clearly to be considered learned literatures. This is to say that the poet was not expected to follow his natural and untutored genius; rather he was required before starting on his career to become steeped in the inherited lore of his craft, to identify himself with its traditional aspirations, and to obtain mastery of the techniques of his art as they had been transmitted from generation to generation. In an often quoted page (written in 1156), Niẓâmî ʿArûdî says of the poet that "he must be well versed in many divers sciences, and eclectic amidst divergent customs; for as poetry is of advantage

in every science, so is every science of advantage in poetry."[11] The implications of this statement will be fully understood only when it is realized that the poet's achievement was judged not only by his aesthetic accomplishment, but also on the factual correctness of his statements. This idea of correctness does not necessarily suggest that the poet's discussions needed to be accurate in terms of naturalistic standards. It is rather to be interpreted as an obligation on the part of the writer to reproduce the canonical patterns and molds in which certain topics had been conventionally cast. It is true that some horses have long, and others short, tails; but this trivial fact does not entitle the poet to praise a horse with a short tail. He is to select the appropriate objects for his discussions, be they panegyrical or satirical, and to discuss them in the appropriate manner. He is to see to it that they are properly styled before being properly praised or run down.[12]

The training which the poet was supposed to undergo was designed to prepare him for these "learned" aspects of his task.

But to this [highest] rank a poet cannot attain unless in the prime of his life and the season of his youth he commits to his memory twenty thousand couplets of the poetry of the Ancients, keeps in view [as models] ten thousand verses of the works of the Moderns, and continually reads and remembers the *dīwāns* of the masters of his art, observing how they have acquitted themselves in the strait passes and the delicate places of song, in order that thus the different styles and varieties of verse may become ingrained in his nature, and the defects and beauties of poetry may be inscribed on the tablet of his understanding. In this way his style will improve and his genius will develop. Then, when his genius has thus been firmly established in the power of poetical expression, and his verse has become even in quality, let him address himself seriously to the poetic art, study the science of prosody, . . . then let him make a critical study of poetic ideas and phraseology, plagiarisms, biographies, and all the sciences of this class, with such a Master as knows these matters, so that he in turn may merit the title of Master. . . .[13]

This attitude toward poetical accomplishment is perfectly in tune with the general formalization of Islamic learning and the overwhelming prestige which is accorded knowledge per se in Islamic civilization. This appreciation of knowledge, in turn, is directly related to the fundamental aspiration of Islam. To the Muslim, the purpose of man is the service of God in the hope of eternal felicity. Through revelation God has communicated to man the exact ways in which He wishes to be served. The data of revelation themselves, the tradition of and about the Prophet, various methods of deductive reasoning—they are the means that have

been used by the community to elaborate that complete system of prescriptions and prohibitions, obedience to which will almost guarantee Paradise to the faithful. It is the learned of the community, the doctors of the faith, who are the repositories of this saving knowledge, and it is the duty of every Muslim man and every Muslim woman to join in the quest for that knowledge which will make it possible for the community to remain a community under God in every detail of its life, collectively as well as individually. It is in the nature of things that the kind of knowledge sought after and appreciated must be authoritative as being directly derivable from the fundamental sources of the religious experience and as having been lived by and acted upon by the believers of the early days of the faith. With learning ingrained in the religious life and with the religious life the justification of human existence, the eminent prestige of the bearers of this near-sacred knowledge becomes understandable. This prestige expresses itself in many and sometimes quite unexpected ways; thus Ṣūlī (d. 947) says at the end of one year of his *Annals* that nothing remains for him but to mention those men of learning who had died during that particular year. Then he adds, "As for the ignorant, rich or poor, we shall not bother about them."[14] It hardly needs to be pointed out that within the framework of a civilization designed to accommodate and realize the Islamic aspiration, literature and the literati could not withdraw from the general learned and traditionalistic style of expression. And since the need to regulate Muslim life was the same wherever Islam spread, regardless of the local traditions it encountered and adjusted to, the pressure on literature—at least on its official representatives—to remain true to the over-all pattern of an erudite traditionalism, never ceased.

The relation of the "spirit of Islam" to the literary productions in the areas dominated by the Muslim religion may, then, perhaps be briefly characterized in this guise: the unity of the literatures that may because of the religious affiliations of their bearers be described as Islamic is safeguarded by the identity of the basic existential experience, by the identity of the fundamental intellectual interests, by the authoritativeness of certain principles of form and presentation, not to forget the kindred political and social organization within which those peoples aspire to live. Where these elements do not directly or indirectly interfere, local developments, even local fashions, based on non-Islamic traditions have fairly free rein, as may be seen by some of the literary trends that were

successful in Persia and Spain or even in some of the heart lands of Islam, such as Mesopotamia. The Islamic aspiration unifies the local traditions, trimming them somewhat in terms of topics and freedom of form, but also by shaping the human ideal which is reflected in poems and *adab* books. On the whole, however, the Islamic aspiration operates and becomes effective through the local tradition, even as the peculiar Muslim piety would appear time and again in local garb. These local variations of the Muslim tradition have often been noticed by the Muslims themselves who, in their concern for the genuine and by its very nature indifferentiatable tradition of the founder, could hardly do other than brand them as *bidaʿ* (blameworthy) innovations.

It does not seem that this situation differs too much from the relation, obtaining in the Western Middle Ages, between a specifically Christian literature and the several national literatures which strove to emerge in the local languages. A number of questions suggest themselves in this connection but, fortunately, need not be answered here. There is, first of all, the intriguing problem: why did some local traditions resist and assert themselves within the Islamic tradition while others yielded? The question also might be ventilated whether it would not be expedient to reclassify the medieval literatures as primarily Islamic or Christian rather than making a national affiliation the principal basis of classification. But were one to accept such reclassification, one would be confronted with a new problem: at what period in the modern literary development does the description by nations become more significant than that by cultures—and this in spite of the fact that even the most typically national literatures in the Christian as well as in the Islamic civilizational area retain characteristically their connection with the civilization to which they owe perhaps not their origin but their early cachet?

II

In his Eleventh Assembly Ḥarîrî (d. 1122) takes his *rapporteur*, al-Ḥârith b. Ḥammâm, to a graveyard where a funeral happens to be in progress. When the interment is over, an old man harangues the mourners, admonishing them to slough off heedlessness and become aware of their insincerity. Passing from rhymed prose to poetry proper, he exhorts his listeners to mend their ways while there is still time. When he is done, he asks for alms. Al-Ḥârith recognizes in the preacher Abû Zaid of Sarûj, the hero of the

Maqâmât, and takes him to task for his hypocrisy. But Abû Zaid retorts brashly and quickly parts company with his censor.

What then, in this famous *maqâma*, may be appraised as peculiarly Islamic? What can be shown to follow a specifically Arabic literary tradition?

a) The Islamic character of the *content* is readily demonstrable. The theme has never lacked treatment since the passing of the Prophet. Early Muslim piety, motivated largely by a contemplation of the end, by the need to live with one's death, viewed human existence as a brief preliminary to dissolution, a long stay in the grave, and the terrors of judgment and eternal punishment. The Prophet is quoted as saying: "Hearts will rust even as iron will." Then he was asked: "What is their polish?" He replied: "Reading the Koran and visiting the graves."[15]

The very hardness of heart, *qasâwa*, to cure which al-Ḥârith repairs to the graveyard, is described in Tradition. A man said to ʿAʾisha: "Mother of the Faithful, I have a disease; hast thou a remedy for it?" She said: "What is thy disease?" He said: "Hardness of heart." She said: "A bad disease is thine; but visit the sick, and attend funerals and keep in mind death."[16] The famous preacher, Ibn al-Jauzî (d. 1200), advises the faithful, "O my brother, if you wish to know the state you will be in after your death, go out to the graves and look at them in their effacement. Imagine your own grave amidst them. Then reflect on what you will need in your grave. And gather much of it as you will spend a long time in your grave—[what you need is] good works."[17]

The theme of man's heedlessness, which dominates the *sajʿ* part of Abû Zaid's address, is well anchored in the Koran. It carries through as a principal motif from Ḥasan al-Baṣrî (d. 728) to Ibn al-Jauzî (and beyond). "O man—and we all of us are that man!—awake from they heedlessness and rouse thyself from thy somnolence. It is time for the physician to be called in to you with his medicaments; for [otherwise] no recovery from what has befallen you may be hoped for."[18]

Ḥarîrî moves on to another theme concisely adumbrated in the Koran. "Rivalry for increase [in wealth and children] deflects you until you visit the graves; nay, but ye shall know [what reward you will have earned]!"[19] For

> your [eternal] home, be it misery or felicity—you have no door to it
> except the grave.[20]

"Sinless was I created from dust; full of sins have I returned to dust."[21] The Prophet is reported as saying: never yet has a man turned his mind often to death without experiencing an increase in his good works. Therefore, Ibn al-Jauzî continues, do bethink yourselves often of it; make death your headrest when asleep; prepare yourselves many a good deed; God will have mercy on him who has mercy on himself.[22] It is in this key that Abû Zaid's poem ends.

There is thus hardly a phrase in the *maqâma* whose motif could not be traced in Muslim theological and paraenetic writing. If it be argued that Christian parallels could easily be found, the Islamic character of Harîrî's sermon would not thereby be impugned; it is only that the common features of the medieval Christian and of the medieval Muslim views of life would be brought into focus.

b) On the other hand, the *outward form* of Harîrî's presentation—the *mise en scène*, the *saj*-poetry sequence, and largely also the motif sequence—may clearly be considered as a phenomenon peculiar to the civilization of Islam. In fact, the relevant question with regard to this outward form is not whether it may be considered a product of the Muslim civilizational area, but to which literary tradition does it owe its characteristics.

The *maqâma*, *Standpredigt*,[23] is a comparatively late development. It does not seem to have any pre-Islamic roots. The recitations of the *quṣṣâṣ*, the professional tellers of anecdote and religious lore, and perhaps the harangues of certain Ṣûfî preachers, contribute the popular basis of what (after an abortive start by the philologist, Ibn Duraid [d. 934]) Badî' az-Zamân al-Hamadânî (d. 1008) is supposed to have been the first to turn into a brief sketch of especially choice and varied diction. Greek *mimus* and Greek *diatribe* are likely to have been contributory elements in the formation of this semidramatic form, which, like the earlier *qaṣîda Sâsâniyya* of Abû Dulaf (*fl.* 930–50) with its use of the argot of criminals and beggars, and the later shadow plays of Ibn Dâniyâl (d. 1310) with their portrayal of the popular milieu, has always remained the domain of the sophisticated and the erudite.

The *maqâma* is first met with in Arabic, but it is not an offshoot of the classical Arabic heritage, nor can its growth be anticipated during the "Arab" empire of the Umayyads. The re-animation of a Hellenistic literary form by its acceptance as a frame within which to show characters and incidents as they could typically occur only in a Muslim metropolitan environment and by lifting it into the literary sphere through the use of a difficult and subtle language

full of allusions, conceits, and technical artifice—this amalgamation of heterogeneous elements by means of the imposition of a unity of style—reflects significantly in a restricted sphere that larger process to which Islamic civilization owes its origin and its fertility.

When the *maqâma* is thus identified as an Islamic rather than as a specifically Arabic literary kind it is not implied that none of its formal elements would be ascribable to the Arabic tradition more narrowly defined. The interchange of prose and poetry in a single piece of narrative is pre-Islamic. In the *ayyâm* tales, the reports of the battle days of the Bedouin Arabs, not infrequently the prose sections can be shown to have grown up around a core of topical verse. In other contexts the illustrative poem is secondary to the prose account. The use of prosimetry with both elements on an equal footing, that is to say with their employment planned beforehand by the narrator, can, with some probability, be traced back to Hellenistic influences. The *maqâma* replaces ordinary with rhymed prose but, apart from this added demand on the writer's skill, the customary structure of prosimetric presentation is maintained—a distinct contribution of the Arabic tradition.

c) The *inner form* shows the Arabic preference for quick and abrupt transition from earnestness to jest, from the crude to the sublime,[24] subtilized into an attitude approaching "romantic irony." When the preacher in the cemetery has reached the conclusion of his sermon with this line:

Thus have I given my precepts, friend, and shown as one who showeth clearly, and happy the man who walketh by my doctrines and maketh them his example;

Al-Ḥârith unmasks him as an impudent beggar. But, unabashed, Abû Zaid rejects his criticism:

Look well, and leave thy blaming; for, tell me, hast thou ever known a time when a man would not win of the world when the game was in his hands.[25]

The contrast between the religious ethics demanded by the sermon and the self-seeking vulgarity of the preacher is predicated on the Islamic milieu; but here, the Islamic setting merely points up possibilities inherent in the earlier literary tradition.

Unmistakably Islamic are the characters of the two personages whom Ḥarîrî introduces. To confine the analysis to one significant element, the identity of their "life curve" with that of the typical repentant sinner needs to be noted. The reckless and gay, the frivolous and loose-tongued, the favorites of elegant and well-nigh amor-

al circles are apt to break with the world when they feel their decline approaching. Abû Nuwâs (d. 810 or 813) in his later years threw himself on God's mercy; Abû 'l-ʿAtâhiya (d. 828) broke with his literary past, at some personal risk, to atone for his erotic songs by composing *zuhdiyyât*, poems of renunciation, after he had been awakened to repentance.[26]

In the fiftieth (last) *maqâma*, Abû Zaid redeems his life by a conversion of unquestioned sincerity. "Truly," he says to the still doubtful al-Ḥârith, "I had stood before them [the faithful of Baṣra] in the stead of a doubter, a deceiver, and, lo, I have turned from them with the heart of the contrite, the devout." Al-Ḥârith follows him to the mosque, where Abû Zaid spends his day in prayer and recitation of the Koran. At night, "He rose to enter his Oratory, and remained alone in converse with the Lord, until, when the morn shone forth, and the wakeful worshipper was entitled to his reward, he followed up his vigil with prayers of praise." And upon hearing his prayers, al-Ḥârith "wept by reason of the weeping of his eyes, as he had wept heretofore because of him."[27]

Al-Ḥârith's understanding for Abû Zaid's conversion is all the more genuine as he, too, had experienced a similar, if less extreme, break in his own life. At the beginning of the Forty-first Assembly, al-Ḥârith relates:

I responded to the calls of wantonness in the bloom of my youth, wherefore I ceased not visiting dainty damsels and listening to the tunes of song, until the warner had arrived and the freshness of life had turned its back on me. Then I craved for rectitude of watchful conduct, and repented of what I had trespassed in the face of Allah. So I began to drive out evil inclinations by good deeds and to mend wicked ways before it was too late, for I turned from the morning-call on the fair, to meeting with the God-fearing, and from mixing with songstresses to drawing near to men of piety, . . .[28]

d) The *attitude toward* and *expectations from literature* that have promoted the development of the *maqâma* and preserved its appreciation over the centuries were touched upon by implication when the learned character of its style was discussed. As a matter of fact, the *maqâma* has always been a preferred medium for the display of philological erudition as well as of prosodical virtuosity. While the themes of Abû Zaid's sermons are utterly conventional and Ḥarîrî's originality is restricted to their treatment, it must be emphasized that, in general, invention of incident, repartee, or argument is more important in the *maqâma* than in other poetical kinds favored by Ḥarîrî's contemporaries. True, it is invention on

a small scale; yet before the *maqâma*, in consequence of its possibilities and its success, fell a victim to scholarly pedantry and completely forsook the realistic tradition of the early Abbasid age, it required sufficient originality in detail and perhaps also in compositional planning to constitute a genre apart, on this ground alone. In this aspect of the *maqâma* we may again be entitled to discern an Islamic strain as distinguished from or perhaps superimposed on the specifically Arabic tradition of literary expression.

NOTES

1. Muqaddasî, *Aḥsan at-taqâsîm* (written in A.D. 985), ed. M. J. de Goeje, *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum* (Leiden, 1906), III, p. 123.

2. Jâḥiz (d. 869), whose theory and practice are especially representative of this attitude, on one occasion made himself the champion of the opposite viewpoint. When a friend trims a book of his he berates him saying: "An author is like a painter. Now I have in my work painted—may God blind your eyes—a figure with two eyes which you have gouged, two ears which you have—may God cut off your ears—cut off, two hands, which you have amputated—may God amputate your hands." So he enumerates all the limbs of the figure, and the man apologizes for his stupidity and promises never to repeat this procedure; cf. Yâqût, *Mu'jam al-buldân*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1866–73), I, 11–12.

3. *Lawâ'iḥ* ("Flashes"), ed. trans. E. H. Whinfield and M. M. Qazwini (London, 1906), No. XXVI, pp. 42–45; quoted by A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Time and Eternity* (Ascona, 1947), pp. 98–100.

4. A. S. Tritton, *Muslim Theology* (London, 1947), pp. 127, 118, 69.

5. G. E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam. A Study in Cultural Orientation* (2d ed.; Chicago, 1953), p. 287.

6. G. E. von Grunebaum, *Comparative Literature*, IV (1952), 333.

7. Koran 26:221–26. The translation follows that of R. Bell, *The Qur'ân* (Edinburgh, 1937–39), except for vs. 225 which Bell renders: "Seest thou not that in every wâdî they fall madly in love."

8. *Comparative Literature*, IV, 333–34.

9. It is interesting to compare the admiration for the *Shâh-Nâmah* which Ibn al-Athîr (d. 1239) expresses (*al-Mathal as-sâ'ir* [Cairo, 1312], p. 324), with the reaction to the narrative of Ḍaḥḥâk's atrocities and his death at the hands of Kâwa (Kâbî) which Yâqût (d. 1229) registers, *Mu'jam al-buldân*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1866–73), I, 293[17-18]: "That (narrative) is a long story, *qiṣṣa*, full of startling and absurd incidents, *dât tahâwîl wa-ḥurâfât*."

10. Conversely, there is evidence that the Persians took some little time before actively accepting the motivations which induced the Arab aristocracy to support the poets. Jâḥiz speaks of a crisis poetry underwent when Persians came into power in Baghdâd, because they did not show much interest in having their genealogies praised by the poets nor did they care to have the memory of their assemblies, *maqâmât*, perpetuated by them; *Kitâb al-buḫalâ'*, ed. G. Van Vloten (Leiden, 1900), pp. 191[18]–92[1] (ed. Aḥmad al-'Awâmirî and 'Alî al-Jârim [Cairo, 1939], II, 126[1-5]; ed. Ṭaha al-Ḥâjirî [Cairo, 1948], p. 161[12-17]; trans. C. Pellat [Beyrouth and Paris, 1951], p. 256).

11. *Chahâr Maqâla*, trans. E. G. Browne (London, 1921), p. 31. Yâqût, *op. cit.*, I, 4[12]–5[2], makes an interesting case for the importance for poets and literary men of geographical handbooks and toponymical dictionaries.[1]

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[1] See note (xvi) of appendix.

12. Even though description, *waṣf*, was the pride and ambition of the Muslim poet or writer, there obtained some feeling for the natural limitations of descriptive art. Thus Jāḥiẓ observes that scenes whose effectiveness derives from the comicality of gestures cannot be adequately reproduced by means of words. Cf. his *Kitāb al-buḥalā*, ed. G. Van Vloten, p. 61¹⁸⁻²⁰ (ed. Aḥmad al-ʿAwāmirī and ʿAlī al-Jārim, I, 108⁵⁻⁶; ed. Ṭaha al-Ḥājirī, p. 51⁶⁻⁷; trans., p. 83).

13. *Chahār Maqāla*, p. 32. The problem of the learned poet is discussed with great understanding by Marzūqī (d. 1030), in the Preface to his commentary on Abū Tammām's *Ḥamāsa;* ed. Shukrī Faiṣal, *Majallat al-Majmaʿ al-ʿIlmī al-ʿArabī bi-Dimashq*, XXVII (1371/1952), 92–95.

14. *Akhbār ar-Rāḍī billāh wa'l-Muttaqī billāh*, trans. M. Canard (Algiers, 1946–50), II, 37.

15. Ḥarīrī, *Séances*, ed. with an Arabic commentary by Silvestre de Sacy (2d ed. [by Reinaud and Dérenbourg]; Paris, 1847–53), I, 121.

16. *The Assemblies of Al-Ḥarīrī*, trans. Th. Chenery (Vol. I) and F. Steingass (Vol. II) (London, 1867–98), I, 364.

17. Ibn al-Jauzī, *Bustān al-wāʿiẓīn* (Cairo, 1353/1934), pp. 188–89.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 168–69.

19. *Sūra* 102:1–3.

20. Ibn al-Jauzī, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 172.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 152, abridged.

23. This is the rendering used by C. Brockelmann, *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1913–34), III, 162.

24. Cf., e.g., Jāḥiẓ (d. 869), *Ḥayawān* (Cairo, 1325/1907), III, 2–3 (2d ed.; [Cairo, 1356–64, 1938–45], III, 5–7).

25. Trans. Chenery, I, 167.

26. For a lesser figure following the same pattern, cf. Saʿīd b. Wahb (d. during the lifetime of Abū 'l-ʿAtāhiya), who ends by repenting his beginnings as a lascivious love poet; cf. Abū 'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, Vol. XXI, ed. R. E. Brünnow (Leiden, 1888), pp. 104–5.

27. Trans. Chenery, II, 181, 182, 185.

28. *Ibid.*, II, 109.

MUSLIM WORLD VIEW AND MUSLIM SCIENCE

"THE GOAL of the first and the last, *al-awwalîn wa'l-âḫirîn*, is happiness [in the next world], *sa'âda*."[1] This happiness as the objective aim of the individual is attainable by devoting oneself to the exclusive service of the Lord. This service, *'ibâda*, in turn, consists essentially in an attitude of unqualified obedience.[2] Obedience is realizable only through knowledge, *'ilm*, of God's will and action, *'amal*, consistent with this knowledge. Even as the Hebrew Proverb recognizes "the fear of the Lord" as "the beginning of knowledge,"[3] so the Koran notes that, "of His servants only those who have knowledge fear Allâh."[4] "And God Himself," explains al-Ghazzâlî, the representative theologian of Islam (d. 1111), "has stated to Abraham: I am the Knowing ... I love every knowledgeable one." In the same vein, Ghazzâlî goes on, "The Prophet regarded any day as lost in which he did not increase in that knowledge that would draw him closer to his Lord."[5]

According to an oft repeated Prophetic Tradition, the search for knowledge is incumbent on every believer, male or female. The kind of knowledge to be sought is indicated by the purpose of the search.

The honor [or nobility, *sharaf*] of knowledge [or a science] depends on the honor of its object, *ma'lûm;* the rank of the learned, on the rank of the knowledge. There can be no doubt that the most excellent, the highest, the most noble, and the most glorious of things to be known is God, the Maker, the Creator, the Real, the One. Thus, knowledge of Him, which is the science of [His] Unity, *tauḥîd*, will be the most excellent, most glorious, and most perfect branch of knowledge. It is "necessary knowledge," the acquisition of which is required of every intelligent person, *'âqil*.[6]

In the concise formula of the Persian mystic Hujwîrî (d. *ca.* 1072–77) "the object of human knowledge should be to know God and His Commandments."[7]

The Muslim's apprehension of the purpose of his earthly life as the outreach for felicity, *sa'âda*, through service, *'ibâda*, has shaped the fundamental aspirations of his civilization both on the political and on the epistemological levels.

The execution of the correct *'ibâda* is impossible without an organized community of believers. Such a community cannot exist without government. Hence the primary purpose of government

will be to render possible the correct and complete *ʿibáda*. In other
words, the state is conceived of, above all, as a moral institution.
Political theory derives its powers from the individual believer's
obligation "to command the good and prohibit the bad."[8] The
government is charged with protecting the Muslim community
from possible encroachments on the part of the non-Muslim world,
with safeguarding it from schism and heresy, and with enforcing
the stipulations of the good life as set forth in Canon Law. The
Canon Law, or *shariʿa*, is based on Revelation and Prophetic Tra-
dition—the government can neither add nor abrogate an iota. The
transmission of the Law is in the hands of lawyer-theologians, who
develop it by interpretation and systematization. Thus the very
survival of Islam as an organized community under God depends on
the existence of an adequate body of *ʿulamáʾ*. Also, integration in
that community is indispensable if the individual believer desires
to lead the correct life as enjoined by Scripture and defined by the
consensus of the learned.

Science, as the endeavor to collect and systematize what infor-
mation the community requires to realize its values, will be di-
rected onto two areas of investigation for, contrary to the prevail-
ing attitude of the West, research per se, as an effort to widen man's
insight into the mysterious ways of the Creator, is not experienced
as a means of glorifying God.[9] Its ethical value depends entirely
on the area to which the investigation is to be directed and on the
intention, *niyya*, of the scholar who will undertake it. So, to be fully
relevant and fully justifiable, science will have to inquire into the
data of Revelation (and the Prophetic Tradition), on which every
phase of the correct life must be based; and it will have to orientate
the believer systematically to this world, in so far as such orienta-
tion is needed for him to understand and organize this world as
the appropriate stage of the correct life.[10] So the classification of
scientific effort which is meaningful in terms of the Muslim's ulti-
mate objective is a division into two areas of inquiry: (*a*) you may
inquire into Revelation (*Offenbarungserkundung*); and (*b*) you may
inquire into the world around you (*Welterkundung*).[11] This dichoto-
my agrees in its result, although not in its rationale, with the funda-
mental division of the sciences into Arabic and ancient which is
generally proposed by Muslim scholars themselves.

Some twenty years after the death of the Prophet Muḥammad
(in A.D. 632) the government prepared an official edition of his
preserved Revelations, attempting at the same time to suppress

what private collections had been previously circulating. The partial failure of the government's endeavors and the ambiguity of the Arabic script of the period in due time created the need for a systematic study of the *variae lectiones* of the Book. But it was not only an occasional textual uncertainty which needed clarification. The very understanding of the sacred words created not inconsiderable difficulties. These difficulties could only be resolved by bringing to bear on the text a full measure of philological research. Pre-Islamic poetry provided its lexicographical basis. The study of literature was to develop into an independent field, but its classical material had come to share to such an extent in the prestige of the sacred text, to whose explanation it had proved indispensable, that any doubt of its authenticity would come close to being resented as sacrilegious.[12]

What has been said of the Koran applies to Prophetic Tradition as well. It was as auxiliaries to the understanding of Scripture and its extension in the *ḥadīth* that, despite some hesitation caused by "poetic irresponsibility," the *ʿulamāʾ* accepted philological and literary studies, from the most general, such as grammar and lexicography, to the most specific, such as prosody and the doctrine of the rhyme. The theological and the political use made of Tradition called for and justified a study of the traditionalists, which gave rise to biographical collections of various kinds. With materials thus sifted and interpreted, systematic theology would operate and Canon Law would gradually be formalized to grow from a body of administrative decisions and of rulings derived from local custom into a system integrated in theological thought and in fact the Islamic science par excellence,[13] whose roots (Koran, *sunna*, consensus, analogical reasoning) were analyzed by a special branch of jurisprudence in the light of an epistemology that had to be careful of the primacy of the data of faith.

Inquiry into the surrounding world was dictated by the needs of the community: the technique of administration, the principles of taxation, and the oganization of the community as such came under scrutiny, with a comprehensive doctrine of political institutions developing as a result; geography first flourished when the government required exact descriptions of the areas under its authority; not only did history yield information concerning the life of the Prophet and the rise of Islam—it was needed as the receptacle of precedent, legal and religious.[14]

A modicum of astronomy and mathematics is required to deter-

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mine the direction in which to turn at prayer, as well as to keep the
sacred calendar under control; a certain amount of medical knowl-
edge must be available to the community. But anything that goes
beyond these manifest (and religiously justifiable) needs can, and
in fact ought to, be dispensed with.[15] No matter how important the
contribution Muslim scholars were able to make to the natural
sciences, and no matter how great the interest with which, at cer-
tain periods, the leading classes and the government itself followed
and supported their researches, those sciences (and their tech-
nological application) had no root in the fundamental needs and
aspirations of their civilization. Those accomplishments of Islamic
mathematical and medical science which continue to compel our
admiration were developed in areas and in periods where the elites
were willing to go beyond and possibly against the basic strains of
orthodox thought and feeling. For the sciences never did shed the
suspicion of bordering on the impious which, to the strict, would be
near-identical with the religiously uncalled-for. This is why the
pursuit of the natural sciences as that of philosophy tended to be-
come located in relatively small and esoteric circles and why but
few of their representatives would escape an occasional uneasiness
with regard to the moral implications of their endeavors—a mood
which not infrequently did result in some kind of an apology for
their work. It is not so much the constant struggle which their
representatives found themselves involved in against the appre-
hensive skepticism of the orthodox which in the end smothered
the progress of their work; rather it was the fact, which became
more and more obvious, that their researches had nothing to give
to their community which this community could accept as an es-
sential enrichment of their lives.[16] When in the later Middle Ages
scientific endeavor in certain fields very nearly died down, the loss
did indeed impoverish Muslim civilization as we view its total un-
folding and measure its contribution against that of its companion
civilizations, but it did not affect the livability of the correct life
and thus did not impoverish or frustrate the objectives of the com-
munity's existence as traditionally experienced.

The impermeability of Muslim civilization to certain lines of
scientific effort did not, however, entail inflexibility where its basic
concerns were at stake. During the eleventh and twelfth centuries
orthodox theology made its peace with the rising tide of mystical
piety, with the result that the theological sciences were enlarged
by the development of what was called "the science of the way

(or: of journeying [to union with God])" or "the science of Ṣûfism [i.e., mysticism]" (*ʿilm as-sulûk; ʿilm at-taṣawwuf*).[17] The body of relevant knowledge was constantly regrouped, reinterpreted and, to a point, reformulated; but the concept of what was relevant knowledge could never be significantly revised or even reconsidered as long as the value scale of the community remained unchanged.

In the treatment of relevant knowledge, the community requires collecting and organizing of given materials rather than "creative" research and synthesizing interpretation. The savant faces nature and its phenomena with that indulgent curiosity which is the expected response when one confronts derived, creaturely reality; his first impulse will be to trace and marvel at the ways of the Creator rather than to comprehend the particular structure and the immanent value of natural phenomena; pious and somewhat sentimental wonderment replaces the activating astonishment which moved the Greek.[18]

Medieval Muslim writers, like their Western contemporaries, have given a great deal of attention to the problem of classifying the sciences. The division of the sciences into indigenous and foreign occurs frequently, albeit disguised under various terminological opposites. Occasionally the attempt is made to explain the division on theoretical rather than on historical grounds. Ibn Ṭumlûs, the Spanish logician (d. 1223), defines the "ancient sciences," *al-ʿulûm al-qadîma*, as those "which are common to all nations and to all religions, i.e., those that are connected with *falsafa* [philosophy]."[19] Likewise the Indian, Tahânawî (d. 1745), in the introduction to his *Dictionary of Technical Terms*, defines the "essential sciences," *al-ʿulûm al-ḥaqîqiyya*, as those "which will not vary in virtue of national and religious variations" and subsumes under this heading, like Ibn Ṭumlûs, the several branches of philosophical learning and its auxiliaries.[20] On the other hand, Saḫâwî (d. 1497) renders the distinction meaningless when he observes that the more specifically "Arabic" sciences, viz., those dealing with Arabic grammar, lexicography, and style, "are not confined to the Arabic language but are to be found in the languages of all the outstanding nations such as the Greeks (Yûnân) and others."[21] The greatest obstacle to carrying through the application of indigenous and foreign branches of learning was the problem of locating logic and speculative theology, *kalâm;* logic because, although clearly a foreign science, it had become a part of the accepted methodology of the Muslim sciences;[22] *kalâm* because,

although a specifically Muslim development, it was inseparable from philosophy in method and even in subject matter. Logic could be dealt with by considering it (as Aristotle had done) as a propaedeutic science and therefore not requiring classification within the scheme of sciences itself; but *kalâm* continued a stumbling-block. On the whole, the Muslim authors adopted, with adjustments, the Aristotelian model with its division into theoretical, practical, and poetical sciences, except that the last group is almost regularly absorbed into the "Arabic" sciences (or their equivalent) while the first two will re-appear among the "non-Arabic."

Where Fârâbî (d. 950) follows the Aristotelian pattern quite faithfully except for giving a specific position to the "linguistic sciences" and again to (Muslim) jurisprudence, or *fiqh*, and *kalâm*, his younger contemporary, al-Hwârizmî (writing *ca.* 976) already offers a classification that is at the same time more adequate to his material and more typical of the Muslim outlook.

 I. The sciences of the religious law
   A. Jurisprudence (*fiqh*)
   B. *Kalâm* (where the theology of non-Muslim groups is also dealt with)
   C. Grammar
   D. The art of the secretary (i.e., the art of writing official documents)
   E. Poetry and prosody
   F. History
 II. Foreign sciences (practically identical with philosophy, *falsafa*)
   A. Theoretical philosophy
      1. Physics, *ʿilm aṭ-ṭabîʿa;* i.e., the science of nature, including *inter alia* medicine, meteorology, mineralogy, and chemistry
      2. Mathematics
      3. Theology (or rather, metaphysics)
   B. Practical philosophy
      1. Ethics (of the individual)
      2. Ethics (of the household: *oikonomia, tadbîr al-manzil*)
      3. Ethics of the large group—politics[23]

More consistent is Ghazzâlî when he opposes, not "religious" and "foreign," but "religious" and "nonreligious," sciences.[24] In his view both *kalâm* and *falsafa* form part of the religious sciences as do the branches of learning subsumed by Hwârizmî under "Arab," with the exception of poetry and history which have been relegated among the nonreligious. Less complete is the classification which Ghazzâlî offers in his *Risâla al-laduniyya*, where the opposition of "religious" and "rational," *ʿaqlî*, sciences separates fields of

learning more conventionally kept apart as "Arab" and "foreign"; the linguistic and literary sciences are here identified as propaedeutic within the "religious" group. Ibn Ḥaldûn (d. 1406) prefers the designations of "traditional" and "philosophical" where Ghazzâlî had spoken of "religious" and "nonreligious," with *kalâm* well integrated in the "traditional" sciences to which the linguistic sciences are considered preparatory.[25] Avicenna (d. 1037), in his *Risâla fî aqsâm al-ʿulûm al-ʿaqliyya*,[26] disregards the historical classification in native and foreign sciences; he subsumes all sciences under one of the two parts of philosophy, *ḥikma*: the "theoretical," or "speculative"—interested in the True; and the "practical"—interested in the Good. Speculative philosophy divides into Lower Science or Physics (in the classical sense), Intermediate Science or Mathematics, and Higher Science or Theology. Logic is treated, with Aristotle, as a preliminary to all sciences; *kalâm* and theology as well as metaphysics are not separated, for in his subdivision of theology Avicenna takes his departure from the several problems and their mutual relationship rather than from their distinctive treatment by the *mutakallim* and the *failasûf*. The tripartitioning of practical philosophy is Aristotelian and identical with that proposed by Ḥwârizmî.[27]

Without reference to any particular authority Tahânawî lists seven possibilities of arriving at a classification of the sciences.[28] The sciences may be divided into:

I. A. Theoretical
   B. Practical
II. A. Auxiliary, *âliyya*
   B. Nonauxiliary, *ghair âliyya*
III. A. Arabic
   B. Non-Arabic
IV. A. Religious
   B. Nonreligious
V. A. Essential, *ḥaqîqiyya*
   B. Nonessential[29]
VI. A. Rational (or, intellectual), *ʿaqlî*
   B. Traditional, *naqlî*[30]
VII. A. Particular, *juzʾî*
   B. Nonparticular (medicine, for instance, is *juzʾî*, as contrasted with physics, since its objective, man, is more particular than that of physics, nature)[31]

The attitude of the community toward the various fields of knowledge is, however, more clearly reflected in another classifica-

tion of the sciences, which divides them into "praiseworthy" and "blameworthy" (or praiseworthy, blameworthy, and neutral). The basis of the distinction is clearly set forth by Hujwîrî:

Knowledge is obligatory only in so far as is requisite for acting rightly. God condemns those who learn useless knowledge,[32] and the Prophet said, "I take refuge with Thee from knowledge that profiteth naught." Much may be done by means of a little knowledge and knowledge should not be separated from action. The Prophet said, "The devotee without divinity is like a donkey turning a mill," because the donkey goes round and round on its own tracks and never makes any advance.[33]

The tradition which describes it as part of the beauty of a man's Islam that he lets go of what does not concern him[34] is interpreted as justifying the rejecting of metaphysical investigation. Generally speaking, such sciences are blameworthy as may seduce the believer into dissent and heresy or as may produce harm to him who practices them or to someone else (such as astrology, magic, or the science of talismans). Besides, in Ghazzâlî's words, a science is to be rejected as blameworthy when

delving into it does not benefit one with knowledge. Therefore, it is reprehensible for him, and is like learning abstruse and hidden sciences before the apparent and important ones. It is like investigating the mysteries of divinity which the philosophers and theologians have attempted without success. No one has been able to comprehend these mysteries . . . except the prophets and saints. One must forbid men to look for these mysteries and must turn them [instead] to the pronouncements of religious law, wherein there is sufficient proof for the believer to be content with. How many men have embarked on these sciences and harmed themselves, and would have been better off in religion had they not done so! . . . Many a person benefits by his ignorance of some matters.[35]

The individual believer is not obligated to be informed concerning even the praiseworthy among the nonreligious sciences, but the community is under obligation to cultivate medicine (which had been branded as useless by some authorities) and arithmetic, *hisâb*, to a certain degree;[36] what goes beyond this level is still praiseworthy, but strictly supererogatory.[37]

From the orthodox viewpoint nothing was lost and perhaps a great deal gained when in the later Middle Ages Islamic civilization prepared to renounce the foreign sciences that could not but appear as dangerous distractions.[38] The retrenchment of intellectual scope must have seemed a small price to pay for the preservation of the original religious experience.[39]

Not only substance but method as well came under suspicion. The desire to safeguard the religious sciences from the inroads of

criticism, the fear of subtle distortion due to reformulation in philosophical terms, led to violent, though ultimately unsuccessful, attacks on logic. "Who deals with logic falls into heresy (*man tamantaqa tazandaqa*)." The Shîʿite *imâm*, Jaʿfar aṣ-Ṣâdiq (d. 765), is quoted as saying that "people will occupy themselves with logic until they will begin to speculate even about God."[40] The undisciplined, not to say careless, argumentation which was obvious in the reasoning of certain theologians provided encouragement for those who advocated recognition of the science of logic as an integral part of theological training. Ghazzâlî justified its use in terms characteristic of the position of all scientific effort within the unbroken tradition of Islamic civilization. "[If the question is asked:] 'What is the profit of knowledge?' the answer will be: all its profits are of low value compared to eternal felicity, which is the felicity of the next world. It, however, is contingent on (*manûṭa*) the perfection of the soul." This perfection is unobtainable unless one is able to distinguish between praiseworthy and blameworthy traits of character, a distinction which only knowledge, *ʿilm*, can make. "There is no way to obtaining knowledge except through logic. This being so, the profit which logic yields is the hunting down of knowledge whose profit in turn is the possession of eternal felicity . . . so the profit of logic is doubtless great."[41] It is as though Ghazzâlî had wished to sum up in one syllogism the objectives of Islamic science as defined by the transcendent purpose to which the believing community had dedicated its life.[42]

The position which in their classification of the sciences Ḥwârizmî and others assigned to *falsafa* is an expression of the general feeling that *falsafa* was the most important and at the same time the most typically foreign body of knowledge which the Muslims had attempted to assimilate. This feeling is unquestionably correct. In systematic structure, individual themes, methods of speculation and argumentation, even in the type of solutions, Islamic philosophy followed its model the less hesitatingly as it found itself confronted with mature and finished systems which spared it the throes of a "pre-Socratic" phase. But for Greek logic and dialectics, Greek metaphysics and psychology, and the Hellenized theology of eastern Christendom, the Muslim could never have stated and upheld his faith in terms of doctrine. However, the indispensability of a philosophical elaboration of the data of Revelation did

not lead to naturalization in Islamic civilization of philosophical inquiry per se—most of the major problems which contact with Greek thought had introduced were taken up by the *kalâm* and were ancillary to the exposition of the verities of the faith. Philosophy as such, *falsafa*, never could attain to a position within Islamic civilization comparable to that held by it in classical antiquity.[43] By the Hellenistic period, philosophy no longer was in competition with religion; in fact it became more and more a substitute for it. It possessed complete freedom of inquiry, not simply in that no organized body wished to restrain it, but in the more profound sense that there was no intellectual barrier to its expanding its systemization to a complete and autonomous interpretation of the universe to account for cosmology and metaphysics as well as for ethics and politics. Its social function was to guide man to felicity, to help him sustain the vicissitudes of fate, and to overcome the fears and uncertainties of life through insight into the structure of the universe and through that virtue which could be cultivated only as a result of a reasoned understanding of the human situation. Philosophy was sought to comfort the ailing heart; the philosopher tended to become a teacher, a physician even, and sometimes a martyr in the service of an elevated morality.[44] Moreover, philosophy constituted the core of education; even though rhetoric might be considered its formal center, the essence of a man's *Bildung* came to him through philosophy.

In Islam the function of *falsafa* is much less significant. Above all, it never enjoyed as free and wide a range—the principal truths had been established and fixed. Speculation could only mean explication. Revelation was autonomous, theology its primary guardian; philosophy must needs become auxiliary, irrelevant, or heretical. Whatever the religious status of the individual philosopher, *falsafa* was a potential rival capable of offering an alternate world view, although its substitution of a scientific principle for the Living God would in any event have precluded it from becoming popular. It would not be received unless it had first achieved a satisfactory relation between verification by faith and verification by reason; and to the Muslim public no solution could be acceptable that did not safeguard the primacy of the data of faith. So *falsafa* became fragmentary by being barred from independent treatment of the two essential Muslim concerns. It concentrated on logic, which was useful for the *kalâm* as well, on physics, psychology, and metaphysics. Theology did not seek intellectual justification of faith

after the manner of Augustinian and Anselmian, not to speak of Thomistic, Christianity, to which—*fides quaerens intellectum*—rational cognition wherever attainable is superior to cognition by faith.[45] On the other hand, *falsafa* did not become a Muslim philosophy by wholeheartedly accepting Revelation as an indispensable auxiliary to reason.[46] It never seriously dealt with the problem of the *creatio ex nihilo*, and only rarely did it assist in an attempt to integrate Muslim eschatology in a rationalized *Weltbild*.

While a defender of philosophy will define its purpose (even as that of the *sharî‘a*) as the perfecting of the souls,[47] the guidance of men has passed out of the hands of *falsafa;* even in the sphere of ethical theory its contribution is spotty and none too relevant; religion inspires morality and does not even need to brush philosophy aside as an unwelcome helper.

Philosophy in Islamic civilization is a field for the specialist as it was in antiquity, but other than in antiquity the educated are no longer expected to be familiar with the specialist's results. *Falsafa* is not included in either of the two types of *allgemeine Bildung* which Muslim society fosters; neither the *adîb* nor the *faqîh* requires a preliminary training in philosophy. Some theologians and *mutakallimûn*, the philosophers proper, laymen or scholars of special interests will cultivate *falsafa*—on the whole an intellectually influential rather than a culturally representative group. As a consequence of those shifts *falsafa* became esoteric and apologetic, thus limiting its cultural effectiveness and spiritual initiative. As *falsafa* could not be fully justified as necessary in terms of the fundamental aspiration of Islam, its alien character was never forgotten; and, more important still, it was ever again made use of to curtail its influence and to deepen the suspicion it had always provoked on religious grounds.

NOTES

1. Ghazzâlî, *Mîzân al-‘amal* (Cairo, 1342), p. 2.

2. Cf., e.g., Faḫr ad-Dîn ar-Râzî, *Mafâtîḥ al-ghaib* (Cairo 1324/1906), I, 5⁶⁻⁷. "Know that *‘ibâda* consists in carrying out the commanded action with a view to glorifying Him Who gave the commandment." Ghazzâlî, *Iḥyâ’ ‘ulûm ad-dîn* (Bûlâq, 1289/1872), IV, 302²⁶⁻²⁷, quotes Muḥammad as having said: "The most excellent happiness is a long life spent in the obedience of Allâh." Cf. A. J. Wensinck, *La pensée de Ghazzâlî* (Paris, 1940), p. 182.

3. Or: wisdom. Prov. I:7.

4. 35:25; trans. R. Bell, *The Qur’ân* (Edinburgh, 1937–39).

5. Ghazzâlî, *Fâtiḥat al-‘ulûm* (Cairo 1322/1904), p. 3.

6. Ghazzâlî, *ar-Risâla al-laduniyya* (Cairo 1328/1910), p. 5.

7. *Kashf al-maḥjûb*, trans. R. A. Nicholson (London and Leiden, 1911), p. 13.

8. Cf. Koran 3:100.

9. This remains true even though, on occasion, the contemplation of creation may inspire an exclamation of the kind al-Mustaufī al-Qazwīnī (wrote 740/1339–40) inserted in his description of the silkworm. "This worm is a mighty example of the manifestation of the power of the Artificer with Whom none may be compared, *ṣāniʿ-i bī-čūn*, the Creator of 'Be, and it was,' who from the slime of such an insignificant worm produces such elegant garments . . . ." (*The Zoological Section of the Nuzhatu-l-Qulūb*, ed. trans. J. Stephenson [London, 1928], p. 59 [trans., p. 41], quoted by R. Ettinghausen, *The Unicorn* [Washington, 1950], p. 57, n. 25.) A similar expression is used by ʿAin al-Quḍāt al-Hamadānī (d. 1131), *Shakwà 'l-gharīb*, ed. Jean M. b. Abd el-Jalil, *Journal asiatique*, CCXVI (1930), 60[10], where God is described as the *ṣāniʿ qadīm li-hādā 'l-ʿālam*, the "eternal artificer of this world."

10. The ethos of the Muslim scientific effort is concisely formulated in Saḫāwī's (d. 1497) dictum with respect to history: "The goal of [the occupation with] history is the hope for God's kindness. God will not fail to reward those who did something well. Actions [are judged] after intentions" (trans. by F. Rosenthal in *A History of Muslim Historiography* [Leiden, 1952], p. 262). At one time Ghazzālī held that jurisprudence, or *fiqh*, was not a science in the true sense of the word since it would not yield such knowledge as will give to the heart the peace of religious certainty; cf. F. Jabre, *Mélanges de l'Institut Dominicain d'Etudes Orientales du Caire*, I (1954), 83.

11. One essential difference between the sciences devoted to those two lines of inquiry is pointed out by Yaʿqūbī (d. probably 897), who, upon describing his assiduous search for source materials for his geographical handbook, observes: "I have come to realize that no created being can comprehend all, *al-ghāya*, and that no man can reach the end, *an-nihāya* [of what is to be known. Nevertheless the incomplete may be presented in my field seeing that] it is not the Canon Law which must be presented completely nor [the science of] religion which for perfection requires comprehensive treatment." (*Kitāb al-buldān*, ed. M. J. de Goeje in *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum* [Leiden, 1892], VII, 233; cf. also the translation of the book by G. Wiet under the title *Yaʿḳūbī; Les pays* [Cairo, 1937], pp. 2–3.)

12. The attitude toward written Arabic in a primitive milieu is illustrated by this report taken from Horace Miner, *The Primitive City of Timbuctoo* (Princeton, 1953), p. 84: "An interesting example of the sacred character of the script is seen in the experience of a Christian missionary who was paying a Tuareg marabout to write Biblical passages in Arabic. When the marabout was asked to write certain passages which conflicted with Mohammedan belief, he refused to commit them to writing. One could not hope to find a better example of a written language being considered as a sacred ritual rather than a secular tool."

13. Cf. the lines of Muḥammad Iqbal (d. 1938), *The Mysteries of Selflessness*, trans. A. J. Arberry (London, 1953), p. 37:

> The being of the Muslim rests alone
> On Law, which is in truth the inner core
> Of the Apostle's faith.

14. Kāfijī (writing in 1463) thus justifies the practice and delineates the scope of history: "History is a branch of learning just like the other codified branches of learning, such as jurisprudence, grammar, style, and so on. It is, therefore, needed just like the other branches of learning. Like [the knowledge of] them, the knowledge of history is necessary as a community duty, *farḍ al-kifāya*, because [or: in order to] it presents the best available method of establishing the chronology of the whole course of human affairs, including the other life" (trans. by F. Rosenthal, *op. cit.*, p. 184; Arabic text, p. 475[5–5].) Others such as Masʿūdī (d. 956) recognized, in addition, the educational value of history. Masʿūdī also realized the function of historical

events as moral and legal precedents. "Many judgments [regarding the moral and legal character of things] are based upon history" (*ibid.*, p. 222). The hesitation felt in certain pious circles about the cultivation of history is reflected in stories such as this. Abû ʿAbdallâh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿAun (d. 1119) sees the Spanish historian, Ibn Ḥayyân (d. 1076), after the latter's death in a dream. "I then said to him: 'What has thy lord done to thee?' To which he answered: 'He has had mercy on me.'—'And the history,' said I, 'which you wrote; did you repent of it?'—'It is true,' he replied, 'I repented of it, but the Almighty received my excuses with kindness, and pardoned me.' " (Quoted by Ibn Ḥallikân [d. 1282], *Biographical Dictionary*, trans. McGuckin de Slane [Paris, 1843–71], I, 480.)

15. For the general attitude, *c*f. Ghazzâlî's defensive argument in his intellectual autobiography, *al-Munqiḏ min aḍ-ḍalâl* (Damascus, 1358/1939), p. 92; trans. W. M. Watt, *The Faith and Practice of Al-Ghazâlî* (London, 1953), pp. 34–35: "A grievous crime indeed against religion has been committed by the man who imagines that Islam is defended by the denial of the mathematical sciences, seeing that there is nothing in revealed truth opposed to these sciences by way of either negation or affirmation, and nothing in these sciences opposed to the truths of religion."

16. Cf. G. Sarton's remarks in connection with Muslim zoology. "One can find in many Arabic and Persian writings speculations on the order of nature as far as the distribution of the three kingdoms is concerned. The Muslims, with but few exceptions, were hardly interested in the scientific aspects of these matters, but rather in their theological implications; they were not thinking so much of evolution from the human or naturalistic point of view as of creation from the divine one" (*Introduction to the History of Science* [Baltimore, 1927–47], II, 61).

17. Sufism is subsumed under *fiqh* and thus, in a sense, kept in submission to it. Sibṭ b. al-ʿAjami (d. 1479), a Shâfiʿite doctor of Aleppo, explains: "Les docteurs de la Loi ne font aucune distinction entre la *khânaqâh* ('l'habitation des soufis') et la zaouïa et le *ribâṭ*, qui est un local constitué wakf pour l'accomplissement des actes de dévotion et des exercises pieux. Les docteurs de la Loi peuvent habiter un *ribâṭ* et percevoir le traitement servi par son wakf, mais il n'est point permis a un soufi d'habiter une madrasa et d'y percevoir un traitement: la raison en est que l'essentiel (*maʿnâ*) du soufisme est compris dans le fiqh, tandis que l'inverse n'est pas vrai." (Trans., from ms., by J. Sauvaget, *Matériaux pour servir à l'histoire de la ville d'Alep*, II [Beyrouth, 1950], 106–7.)[1]

18. Cf. the interesting definitions of what constitutes the wondrous, ʿ*ajîb*, and the strange, *gharîb*, in Zakariyyâ b. Muḥammad al-Qazwînî, *Cosmography*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Göttingen, 1848–49), I, 5–8, 9–12 (trans. H. Ethé [Munich, 1868], I, 6–12, 16–21).

19. *Kitâb al-madḫal li-ṣinâʿat al-manṭiq*, ed. trans. M. Asín Palacios, as *Introducción al arte de la lógica por Abentomlûs de Alcira*, Part I (all published, Madrid, 1916), p. 6 (trans., p. 5).

20. Ed. A. Sprenger and W. Nassau Lees (Calcutta, 1862), p. 33.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

22. Muḥammad al-Ḫwârizmî, *Mafâtîḥ al-ʿulûm*, ed. G. Van Vloten (Leiden, 1895), p. 132[2–4]. "Some add logic as a third part to theoretical and practical philosophy, others subsume it under theoretical philosophy, a third group considers it a tool of philosophy, yet others treat it [at the same time] as part and as tool of it."

23. Ḫwârizmî's classification has been analyzed, e.g., by E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, I (Cambridge, 1902), 382–83; Tj. de Boer, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, IX, 880–81; and L. Gardet and M.-M. Anawati, *Introduction à la théologie musulmane. Essai de théologie comparée* (Paris, 1948), pp. 109–12.

24. *Iḥyâʾ ʿulûm ad-dîn* (Bûlâq, 1289/1872), I, 12–41.

[1] See note (xvii) of appendix.

25. Cf., e.g., S. van den Bergh, "Umriss der muhammedanischen Wissenschaft nach Ibn Ḫaldûn," (Diss., Freiburg i. B., Leipzig, 1912), *passim;* Gardet and Anawati, *op. cit.,* pp. 121–24.

26. Also called *R. fî taqâsîm al-ḥikma wa'l-ʿulûm;* published in *Tisʿ Rasâ'il fî 'l-ḥikma wa'ṭ-ṭabîʿiyyât* (Cairo, 1326/1908), pp. 104–18; on the *Epistle,* cf. G. S. Anawati, *Essai de bibliographie avicennienne* (Cairo, 1950), pp. 12–15. The essential content of the *Risâla* is reproduced by Tahânawî, *op. cit.,* p. 41.

27. Avicenna's classification has been conveniently set forth by B. Carra de Vaux, *Avicenne* (Paris, 1900), pp. 177–80; his classification of the parts of logic is translated in I. Madkour, *L'Organon d'Aristote dans le monde arabe* (Paris, 1934), pp. 10–11. Ibn Ḥazm (d. 1064) argues in his (unpublished) *Risâla marâtib al-ʿulûm,* the "Epistle on the Hierarchy of the Sciences," that of the seven different branches of learning that were cultivated in his day by every nation, three, viz., religious law, history, and linguistics would differ from place to place, while the remaining four, viz., arithmetic, medicine, philosophy, and astronomy, would be common to all nations at all times; cf. M. Asín Palacios, *al-Andalus,* II (1934), 51; and Saḫâwî *apud* Rosenthal, *op. cit.,* p. 264.[1]

28. *Op. cit.,* pp. 2–4.

29. For the definition, cf. *ibid.,* p. 6.

30. Cf. Subkî *apud* Murtaḍâ, *Itḥâf as-sâda* (Cairo, 1311), II, 87[14–15]: "The Greeks accept only *ʿaql* as a source of knowledge, the scholastics, *mutakallimûn,* in addition *naql,* authority or tradition." The statement characterizes concisely the difference between Muslim and "foreign" thought.

31. For the Muslim classification of sciences, cf. also C. A. Nallino, *Raccolta di scritti* (Rome, 1939–48), V, 2–4. It should be noted that M. M. Moreno, *L'Islamismo e l'educazione* (Milan, 1951), pp. 6–7, has arrived at a derivation of the scope of specifically Islamic science which is almost identical with that delineated in the present paper.

32. Koran 2:96.

33. Hujwîrî, *op. cit.,* p. 11.

34. E.g., *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft,* LXVII (1913), 532.

35. *Iḥyâ',* I, 30[10–15]; trans. S. Bishlawy, "The Book of Science of Ghazâlî (with translation of the first three chapters)" (M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1945), pp. 115–16.

36. Technically speaking, this is a *farḍ kifâya.* The limited concern for the development of a science like medicine accounts in part for the conservatism in medical matters which we meet with in the later Middle Ages. In a characteristic passage, the Egyptian Ibn al-Uḫuwwa (d. 1329), writing about the duties of the "censor," insists that the oculists must go by the teachings of Ḥunain b. Isḥâq (d. 873), the bonesetters by those of Paul of Aegina (fl. in Alexandria ca. 640), and the surgeons by Galen's (d. ca. 200) *De Compositione Medicamentorum secundum Genera* (translated into Arabic by Ḥunain's nephew, Ḥubaish); cf. Ibn al-Uḫuwwa, *Maʿâlim al-qurba fî aḥkâm al-ḥisba,* ed. with an abstract of the contents by R. Levy (London, 1938), pp. 207–8 (trans., pp. 58–59).

37. *Iḥyâ',* I, 38–41; on the distinction of *ʿulûm maḥmûda* and *maḏmûma.* Cf. also Tahânawî, *op. cit.,* pp. 51–53.

38. A certain "nationalistic" irritation against the foreign authorities invoked by those sciences is occasionally noticeable; cf., e.g., Ghazzâlî, *Tahâfut al-falâsifa,* ed. M. Bouyges (Beirut, 1927), p. 5: "The origin of their unbelief lies in their having listened to horrifying names likeISocrates,Hippocrates,Plato,Aristotle,and their likes."

39. The extremist orthodox attitude is well reflected in the Jewish scholar's, Yûsuf as-Sabtî, report on the burning of the books, in 1192, of the physician ʿAbd-

[1] See note (xviii) of appendix.

assalâm of Baghdâd. The destruction of the library of the savant whose devotion to astronomical studies had earned him the reputation of an atheist was carried out with great ceremony. A preacher delivered an oration in which he cursed all students of philosophy. The Jewish visitor narrates: "I went to the assembly and heard the speech of Ibn al-Mâristânî [the preacher]. In his hand I saw Ibn al-Haitham's [d. 1038] book on astronomy in which he was pointing to a circle representing the heavens, and I heard him talk of it as a mighty calamity and an unspeakable disaster; a blank misfortune. He then tore it across and threw it into the fire. It was proof to me of his ignorance and fanaticism for there is no irreligion in astronomy, on the contrary it is a pathway to faith and to knowledge of the omnipotence of God—in what he has ordained and established." Cf. R. Levy, *A Baghdad Chronicle* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 239–40.[1]

40. The acute irritation caused by the early attempts at conceptual precision—comparable to the irritation which Socrates provoked—is reflected in ash-Shâfiʿî's alleged sayings: "If people only realized the arbitrariness (*al-ahwâ*) of the *kalâm* they would flee it as they flee a lion" and, "When I hear anybody say 'the name is either identical with the thing named or it is not identical,' I know for sure [literally, I testify, *ashhadu*] that he belongs to the people of the *kalâm* and that he has no religion, *dîn*." (*Iḥyâ*, I, 93²⁵⁻²⁶; to himself, however, Ghazzâlî justified the use of the new terms introduced by the *kalâm* on the ground that any science requires its own terminology, *ibid.*, 94¹² ff.) Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 855) went so far as to state: *ʿulamâ al-kalâm zanâdiqa*, "scholastics are heretics," *ibid.*, 93²²⁻²³ (so also Abû Yûsuf [d. 798], *ibid.*, 94²). Ibn Qutaiba (d. 889), *ʿUyûn al-aḫbâr* (Cairo, 1925–30), II, 141, quotes this saying of Abû Yûsuf's: "Who seeks religion, *dîn*, through speculation, *kalâm*, falls into heresy; who seeks wealth through alchemy, falls into bankruptcy; who seeks the out-of-the-way *ḥadîth* falls into dishonesty." E. Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1938), pp. 5–15, esp. pp. 6 and 11, describes the unremitting hate with which, ever since the days of Tertullian, certain Christian circles have combatted philosophical speculation and, more particularly, dialectics. The interest which Muslim society under the early Abbasids had come to take in philosophical discussion is reflected in the numerous anecdotes which turn on the more or less facetious use of terms such as "substance," "accident," or "atom." Cf., e.g., Jâḥiẓ, *Kitâb al-buḫalâ*, ed. G. Van Vloten (Leiden, 1900), pp. 122 and 139¹⁴ (ed. Aḥmad al-ʿAwâmirî and ʿAlî al-Jârim [Cairo, 1939], II, 27–28, 53⁴; ed. Ṭaha al-Ḥâjirî [Cairo, 1948], pp. 101, 116⁴; trans. C. Pellat [Beyrouth and Paris, 1951], pp. 163–64, 184). For an example from poetry, cf. Abû Tammâm (d. 846), *Dîwân*, ed. Ibrâhîm al-Aswad (Beirut, 1347/1928), p. 47⁴. Elsewhere Abû Tammâm praises al-Ḥasan b. Wahb by noting that "he does not come up with foul discourse nor does he move like one chained by the restrictions of logic, *ḥudûd al-manṭiq* [lit. limitations, definitions]"; quoted by Ibn al-Muʿtazz *apud* Marzubânî (d. 994), *Kitâb al-muwashshaḥ* (Cairo, 1343), p. 311; reprinted in *Rasâ'il Ibn al-Muʿtazz*, ed. M. ʿA. Ḥafâjî (Cairo, 1365/1946), p. 23. Jâḥiẓ admits the use in poetry and elevated discourse of the terminology of the *mutakallimûn* only when it is employed to produce a humorous effect; cf. C. Pellat, *Le Milieu baṣrien et la formation de Ǧâḥiẓ* (Paris, 1953), p. 128, n. 4. An example is provided by the story of the philosopher an-Naẓẓâm (d. 845) and the beardless young man, *amrad*, who without knowing the identity of his interlocutor encourages him to make advances in the very terms of Naẓẓâm's philosophy; Abû 'l-Faraj al-Iṣfahânî, *Kitâb al-aghânî*, ed. R. E. Brünnow (Leiden, 1888), XXI, 150–51. Interesting samples of theological argument before the influence of the thought methods of Christian theology and Greek philosophy had made itself felt can easily be collected. Cf., e.g., *ʿUyûn*, II, 152–54; the material dealt with by A. S. Tritton, *Muslim Theology* (London, 1947), chap. II (cf. p. 48); and J. Schacht, *Studia Islamica*, I (1953), 27–28.

[1] See note (xix) of appendix.

It is important to realize that systematic reasoning was introduced into Islamic thought not merely by way of philosophy (and theology) but through the labors of the legists of the second century as well. Even as rabbinic methods of legal interpretation were deeply influenced by Hellenistic methods (transmitted through Hellenistic rhetoric rather than through the legal authorities themselves), so the "presence in ancient Islamic legal science of Greek logic, as exemplified by conclusions *a maiore ad minus* and negatively *a minore ad maius*, the argument of the *sorites*, the concepts of genus and species, the *regressus ad infinitum*, and a whole technique of disputation" (J. Schacht, *The Journal of Comparative Legislation and International Law*, 3d ser., XXXII [1950], Part iii and iv, p. 13) is evidence of a not inconsiderable infiltration into Muslim thinking of classical elements prior to, or at least independent of, the influx of logic and philosophy per se.

41. *Maqāṣid al-falāsifa*, ed. G. Beer (Leiden, 1888), pp. 6–7; the passage is quoted in part by I. Goldziher, "Die Stellung der alten Orthodoxie zu den antiken Wissenschaften," *Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie, phil.-hist. Kl.*, 1915/8, p. 30; for the *imām* Jaʿfar, cf. *ibid.*, p. 26. Cf. also Ghazzālī's statement, *Munqiḏ*, p. 93 (trans., p. 35): "Nothing in logic is relevant to religion by way of denial or affirmation."

42. The necessity to uphold the primacy of revealed knowledge compelled the thinker to deprecate the certainty of scientific knowledge. Thus Ghazzālī, restating a train of thought suggested already by Jāḥiẓ (cf. Asín Palacios, *al-Andalus*, III [1935], 352–56), observes: "The proof of the possibility of there being prophecy and the proof that there has been prophecy is that there is knowledge in the world the attainment of which by reason is inconceivable; for example, in medical science and astronomy. Whoever researches in such matters knows of necessity that this knowledge is attained only by Divine inspiration and by assistance from God most high. It cannot be reached by observation. For instance there are some astronomical laws based on phenomena which occur only once in a thousand years; how can these be arrived at by personal observation? It is the same with the properties of drugs" (*Munqiḏ*, pp. 139–40 [trans., p. 65]).

43. Its ambition has not diminished, though. Ḫwârizmî defines it, *op. cit.*, p. 131[12], as the science of the essence of things (*ḥaqāʾiq al-ashyāʾ*) and of acting according to which is best, *aṣlaḥ*. For the consciousness of the oneness of philosophy throughout the movement of civilization, cf., e.g., the passage in Fârâbî, *Taḥṣîl as-saʿâda* (Hyderabad, 1345/1926), p. 38, in which the passing of *ʿilm* from the Chaldeans to the Egyptians, thence to the Greeks and back east through the Syrians to the Arabs, is outlined.

44. Cf. M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* (Munich, 1941–50), II, 288.

45. Cf. E. Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, trans. A. H. C. Downes (New York, 1940), p. 35.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

47. Ibn Ḥazm, *Kitâb al-fiṣal fî 'l-milal* (Cairo, 1317–21), I, 94; trans. M. Asín Palacios, *Abenházam de Córdoba y su historia crítica de las ideas religiosas* (Madrid, 1927–32), II, 203–4. "La filosofía, considerada en su constitutivo esencial, en su significado, en sus efectos, en el fin a que tiende su estudio, no es otra cosa que la corrección o mejora del alma humana, conseguida, ya por medio de la práctica de las virtudes morales y de la buena conducta en esta vida para alcanzar en la otra la salvación, ya por medio de una buena organización social, así doméstica como política. Ahora bien, este mismo y no otro es el fin de la ley religiosa o revelada."

VII

GOVERNMENT IN ISLAM

PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

THE FOLLOWING is an attempt to describe in a small number of propositions the essential structure of Muslim government. Attention is focused on the classical period of Islamic political science from Mâwardî (d. 1058) to Ibn Taimiyya (d. 1328).

I

The purpose of man is the service of God, *'ibâda*.

II

Complete *'ibâda* requires the existence of an organized community of believers.

III

The existence of such a community requires government.

IV

The primary purpose of government is the rendering possible of *'ibâda*.[1]

V

The primarily moral purpose of the state is manifest in

A. 1. The ranking of the *ḥisba*, i.e., the obligation to command the good and prohibit the bad, *al-amr bi'l-ma'rûf wa'n-nahy 'an al-munkar*, as the foremost civic-religious duty;[2]
  2. The derivation by political theory of the purpose of government from the *ḥisba* obligation;[3]
  3. The conception of the office of the *muḥtasib*, or (market) inspector (and censor) as a specialization of the general duty of the *ḥisba*.[4]

B. The acceptance of Canon Law, *sharî'a*, as a limitation of the government's judiciary and executive powers. The limitation applies to both commission and omission of action. As, for instance, the execution of canonical punishment is a religious act, the government is not free to increase or to cancel the prescribed penalty. (Cf. *Siyâsa*, p. 100 [trans., p. 605]).[5]

VI

In a community constituted for the purpose of ʿibāda no grounds
for inequality among the legally responsible, *mukallaf*, Muslims
may exist—except that the Prophet ranked the believers in order
of their piety.

VII

Hence
- A. All Muslims are equal before the law except in so far as their
    isonomia is modified by
    1. the social heritage of earlier ages or cultures such as slavery
       and the depressed status of women; and
    2. the national or political stratification of the moment (rule
       of the Arab aristocracy, of the Turkish and Circassian
       mamlūks over Egyptians and Syrians, and the like).
- B. The impossibility for any non-Muslim to be a full member of
    the community of true believers. So the non-Muslims are
    neutralized in largely self-governing religious communities of
    their own whose relation to the ruling *umma Muḥammadiyya*
    are settled by treaties that tend to degenerate into unilateral
    contracts.

VIII

Plato and Aristotle, trusting man's natural light, considered the
good life inseparable from participation in the state which, to
them, is a value in itself.

The Middle Ages, Christian and Muslim alike, taking a dim view
of man, look upon the state as the indispensable stage for the good
life which leads through obedience to salvation. The value of the
state is derived from its moral purpose.

IX

The legal basis of an assignment of duties to the government and
at the same time the basis of governmental independence *vis-à-vis*
both individual and community, is the distinction in Canon Law
between *farḍ ʿain*, personal, and *farḍ kifāya*, collective, obligation.

X

In its task of guaranteeing ʿibāda the government is actually
faced with three sets of tasks:

A. Safeguarding the Muslim community *vis-à-vis* the non-Muslim world with "safeguarding" usually interpreted to mean "expanding"—the resulting duty is *jihâd*, Holy War. The conquest of unbelievers as such is pleasing to Allâh. Missionary activities often follow but rarely accompany *jihâd*. The near identity, at certain periods, of nation and religious community caused any foreign war to be thought of as *jihâd*. The inclusion in the concept of *jihâd* of war against heretics parallels Augustine's *bellum Deo auctore* against the heretics who are to be compelled to rejoin the Church (the much quoted *coge intrare* which Brun of Querfurt [d. 1009] was the first to direct against the heathen). War on non-Christians with a view to their subsequent conversion was advocated by Pope Gregory I, but never accepted as Church doctrine. (For the Christian *bellum iustum* and related ideas, cf. C. Erdmann, *Die Entstehung des Kreuzzugsgedankens* [Stuttgart, 1935], especially pp. 1–29 [and p. 97 for Brun of Querfurt].)

B. Safeguarding the Muslim community against
   1. schism;
   2. heresy.

C. The enforcement of the stipulations of the good life as set forth in Canon Law on the basis of revealed text and tradition and in application of generally agreed to principles of elaboration or interpretation; or else, the establishment and maintaining of the conditions with which those stipulations can be carried out and enforced.

XI

The interest of the community in the continuity of the individual political unit within the area under Muslim rule, or *dâr al-Islâm*, is slight as compared to the interest in the integrity of the whole. *Eleutheria*, i.e., autonomy rather than freedom, is insisted upon only for the *dâr al-Islâm*, not for the "accidentally" existing states among which the *dâr al-Islâm* is distributed at any given moment.[5]

XII

The intellectual justification of the Roman Empire was the consummation of cultural unity through political unification (or again the realization of the Stoic *cosmopolis*); that of the Spanish, eco-

nomic self-sufficiency and the prevention of scarcity; that of the British and the American (in its early phase), the moral obligation to extend the area of good government.

By contrast, the extension of Muslim rule is *objectively* justified as the duty to spread the superior truth which, as a way of life, can be fully realized only under a Muslim administration; *subjectively*, by the feeling that leadership and its honor belong to the "best community," which is Islam.[7]

<div align="center">XIII</div>

To appreciate Muslim sentiment it must be realized that to medieval (and much of ancient) thought, Western as well as Eastern, *being* was susceptible of gradation; that the higher an entity's place in the creaturely hierarchy the more did it participate in *being* and the closer it was to *pure being*, or God; and finally, that as in God *perfect being* and *summum bonum* coincided, a hierarchy of moral values paralleled that of ontic values. So the higher *virtus* of the Muslim as the sole possessor of ultimate truth called forth his higher honor, or *sharaf*, in the societal order.[8]

<div align="center">XIV</div>

Anticipating the Muslim attitude, the Christian Fathers and with especial forcefulness Augustine, insisted that a just state is one in which the true religion is taught, i.e., since the advent of Christianity only a Christian state can be just. The chief purpose of the government of this state must be "contributing to human salvation by preserving the purity of the faith."[9]

<div align="center">XV</div>

The duty of the government to suppress schism and heresy is to be carried out in obedience to the views of the *'ulamá'*.

In contrast to both the Sassanian and the Christian Roman (and Byzantine) governments the Muslim state did not employ organized religion as part of its administrative machinery, which is one reason why it was not, as a rule, concerned with enforcing complete agreement on theological and legal doctrine.[10]

<div align="center">XVI</div>

The community through its *'ulamá'* revises periodically its concept of itself, determining who is and who is not to be considered a member of the traditional community, *ahl as-sunna wa'l-jamá'a*,

or in theological terms, what is to be considered orthodox, what heresy. In Sunnite Islam such self-definition is usually done with a view to preserving the unity of the *umma Muḥammadiyya;* in the sects a tendency to further fragmentation prevails.

<div align="center">XVII</div>

Schism arose from dispute over the person of the legitimate ruler of the Muslim community. It developed into *heresy* due to

A. The infiltration into political argumentation of traditional, that is, pre-Islamic thought-motifs (such as the epiphany of god in the ruler; dynastic legitimism—in the case of the Shi'a);

B. Moral absolutism (the extreme egalitarianism of the Ḥârijites and their exclusion of the sinner from the community, which will be better understood when viewed in the light of Section XIII above);

C. Historical accidents such as the multinational character of the community.

<div align="center">XVIII</div>

Muslim public law does not start from a definition of the state, but from that of the *imâma*, the leadership of the community. The concept of the state is alien to Muslim political theory in its classical phase and down to Ibn Ḥaldûn (d. 1406).

Here lies the essential difference between the political thought of Islam and that of the Christian successors of the *Imperium Romanum*. Christian thought never divorced itself from the Roman concept of the territorially circumscribed organization of power, and the limits of the Roman Empire lingered on as the natural borders of the ideal state. More precisely put—the Catholic Occident was, on the whole, satisfied to formulate its political aspirations in terms of the so-called Western Empire, but anxiously strove to maintain the religious unity of the entire *orbis Romanus*. The Byzantine Orient, on the other hand, never abandoned the claim to supremacy over the totality of the *orbis Romanus*, but did not make any effort to unite the Christian *oikoumene* under orthodox leadership. (For the Byzantine view of their empire, cf. the excellent statement of G. Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des byzantinischen Staates* [Munich, 1940], pp. 16 f.)

In this connection it is relevant to note that the idea of a succession of a limited number of empires which, on the basis of the Book

of Daniel, effectively influenced the philosophy of history in the West, did not leave any mark on the political science of Islam.

Consequently, it is never the nature or concept of an *umma* as such that is discussed but only the conditions of membership in the *umma Muḥammadiyya*.[11]

XIX

The community as such is interested principally in being able to lead the good life; it is less interested in who administers it. (1) This attitude, (2) the conviction that government and transgression of the Law are inseparable, and (3) as time wears on, the political situation and especially the subjection of the community to foreign rulers lead to

A. Widespread disinclination to collaborate in government; it is particularly those classes that control the Canon Law by the systematic development of the principles of lawfinding and by the practice of delivering legal opinions, or *fatwā's*, when consulted on doubtful points, that stay aloof from politics and administration; the result is an increasingly deep cleavage between legal theory and executive practice;[12]

B. Growing indifference to the legality and the moral level of the particular government or the particular governmental act, provided it remains possible for the individual believer to carry on his life under the law, and provided the government protects the main concerns of the legal schools and of popular piety;

C. Recognition of the *de facto* ruler as *de jure;*

D. The feeling that a bad ruler is better than civil disturbance, let alone no ruler at all.[13]

XX

It should be remembered that the Christian Fathers, too, hold the bad ruler entitled to obedience, even as regards uncanonical acts. And before them the Epicureans and Stoics like Seneca had declared that a tyrant's rule was acceptable, seeing that he removed the outer obstacles to the philosophical life by taking charge of governmental functions.

Everywhere cultivation of the inner man as the goal of life has tended to estrange man from political activity.[14]

XXI

The government is compelled to develop a system of executive law, sometimes called *qânûn*, and executive jurisdiction, the *maẓâlim* courts, side by side with the *sharî'a*. In the very nature of things this system is more flexible, more realistic, more effective. The *'ulamâ'* are able to justify it on the ground of its serving the *maṣlaḥa*, the public interest.

XXII

Limitations by the government of the freedom of the individual (to use a concept foreign to classical Islam) are justifiable (1) in view of its duty to prevent damage being done to any Muslim, and (2) by the public interest, *maṣlaḥa*.

XXIII

The power of the government is not limited by any political rights of the individual Muslim but by the *sharî'a* in so far as it

A. Denies to the government certain functions (such as legislation, properly so called), and

B. Prescribes its course of action in some areas (such as its dealings with non-Muslims within the *dâr al-Islâm* and to some extent also outside it; the kind of penalties to be imposed wherever Canon Law has arrived at a ruling; the admissibility of various economic, social, and cultural practices).

XXIV

The *ḥisba* implies the right to criticize the government. But it bestows freedom of speech without protecting against governmental reprisal.

XXV

The *ḥisba* may be carried to what amounts to armed intervention, not against the government, but against the trespassing fellow Muslims.

XXVI

The right to resist the government is admitted on moral grounds: a command entailing disobedience to God must not be obeyed.[15]

XXVII

Since, however, the community is primarily interested in the

preservation of its own stability, theory in effect seriously limits the *ḥisba vis-à-vis* the government.[16]

XXVIII

Apart from actual rebellion extralegal recourse against (individual acts of) the government is had through the protests and admonitions of the religious elite.

A. The ʿ*alîm* whose *fatwà* may demonstrate the incompatibility of the governmental action with Canon Law or Tradition. The government parries by introducing innovations under the protection of *fatwàs* which it solicits from a *muftî* whose authority is largely derived from government appointment. The negative *fatwà* of an ʿ*alîm* discredits but does not annul the executive act against which it is directed.

B. The zealot, ascetic or Ṣûfî "saint" (who may be one and the same person).[17]

XXIX

In actual administration the government uses, side by side, *sharîʿa, qânûn, Reichsrecht* and *Volksrecht* (i.e., local customary law, or ʿ*urf*) and builds up its official apparatus without much regard to the stipulations of Canon Law.[18]

XXX

The definitions of the function of the *imâm* that range from realistic description to utopian portrayal of the ideal country as represented in the ideal ruler, and to *Geschichtsmetaphysik* in the Shîʿite *imâm* and the Mahdî, constitute an attempt to legalize or protect actual government or the actual condition of the state.[19]

XXXI

The Shîʿite concept of the *imâma* combines

A. Ancient God-king memories;

B. The Platonic idea of the best man as the ruler; during the transmission from Plato through Fârâbî (d. 950) to Ṭûsî (d. 1274) and Ḥillî, perfection becomes infallibility; and

C. The idea of permanent divine guidance of the community through the ruler's union with the Active Intellect (Fârâbî) or in more conventional language, through the perpetuation of the prophetic office by the divinely inspired *imâm*.

By contrast the Sunnite (and the Christian) rulership merely signify the office of presiding over the coercive organization that is indispensable for the attainment by individual and community of the *summum bonum*.[20]

<div align="center">XXXII</div>

Although under the impact of Iranian traditions the Sunnite caliphs were ceremonially exalted beyond the requirements of their office, their function continued to be that of guarantors of the legality of the body politic. If the theologian approved of their ceremonial remoteness, he did so solely in the belief that awe of the ruler would stabilize the state.[21]

The contradiction inherent in the political attitude of Islam is due to the fact that (a) on the one hand, the true purpose of man's life is otherworldly, but that (b) on the other hand, its fulfilment depends on the functioning of a body politic of which each Muslim is a member by birth and from which he cannot withdraw.

The Christian never did need a state to fulfill the otherworldly purpose of his existence. The Roman Empire was rather an obstacle to the good life, unless the Christian's relation to it be viewed as a test. Withdrawal from it was both permissible and possible. In fact, such withdrawal remained possible even from the Christian state because the essential concerns of the soul continued to be administered by the clerical polity.[22]

The early history of Christianity and this dichotomy of Christian government preserved the West from the organizational breakdown that was the consequence of the unrealizable expectation which Islam had to place in the state.

To sum up:

<div align="center">XXXIII</div>

Islamic thought is authoritarian. Political absolutism parallels the theological absolutism of God's relation to His creatures.[23]

<div align="center">XXXIV</div>

Within Sunnite Islam, *lawful* government is confined to assisting in the realization of the good life as recognized at any given moment by the *ijmāʿ*, the consensus of the learned, whose authority is verifying (*konstatierend*) rather than normative (as is the authority of the Russian Orthodox Synod in contrast to that of

Pope and Council in the Roman Church). The extreme wing of the pious denied the existence of lawful government in Islam after the period of the "orthodox" caliphs, *al-ḫulafâ' ar-râshidûn*, i.e., after A.D. 661.

Actual government resembles rather closely medieval government elsewhere.

This is to say that the spasmodic assertion of governmental authority did, in practice, favor particularistic tendencies. Political (as distinct from religious and intellectual) interests would operate on the parochial rather than on the imperial level. The ruler's influence was apt to decline with distance from his residence; in the later period, many a sultan led the migratory life typical of the German emperors. Administrative techniques were poor, rights and duties easily forgotten for want of archives and loss of documents (the papal curia, the *dîwâns* of the caliphs in the good period and those of Egypt appear to have been the only effective chancelleries of the early and "high" Middle Ages). The conviction of the unalterability of the Law is accompanied by much uncertainty with regard to its content.

It should perhaps be noted that despite theoretical differences and actual hostilities between Sunnite and Shî'ite governments their administrative practices would seem to have been more or less the same.

XXXV

Within Shî'ite Islam, the cleavage between aspiration and accomplishment, or rather between actuality and its theoretical justification, is less pronounced and less painful, because the hidden *imâm* as the direct representative of God's will is legislator, as well as executor. Legal change is thus more readily accounted for than in Sunnite Islam.

XXXVI

While Islam is in one sense the political community *par excellence* it has tended to make the pious Muslim more and more nonpolitical.

NOTES

Bibliographical Note

Abû Ya'lâ	Abû Ya'lâ al-Farrâ' al-Ḥanbalî (d. 1065), *al-Aḥkâm as-sulṭâniyya* (Cairo, 1356/1938).
Ghazzâlî	Abû Ḥâmid al-Ghazzâlî (d. 1111), *Iḥyâ' 'ulûm ad-dîn* (Bûlâq, 1289/1872). Especially Bk. XIX: *Kitâb al-amr bi'l-ma'rûf wa'n-nahy 'an al-munkar*, in Vol. II, pp. 283–334.

Ḥillî	Ibn Muṭahhar al-Ḥillî (d. 1325), *al-Bâbu 'l-Ḥâdî ʿAshar*, trans. W. McE. Miller (London, 1928).
Ḥisba	Ibn Taimiyya (d. 1328), *al-Ḥisba fi 'l-islâm* (Cairo, 1318/1900).
Ibn Ḥaldûn	Ibn Ḥaldûn (d. 1406), *Prolegomena*, ed. Quatremère (Paris, 1858); trans. De Slane (Paris, 1862–68).
Ibn Jamâʿa	Ibn Jamâʿa (d. 1333), *Taḥrîr al-aḥkâm*, ed. trans. H. Koßler. In *Islamica*, VI (1934), 349–414; VII (1935), 1–64; *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, XXIII, 6 (1938), 18–129.
Laoust	H. Laoust, *Essai sur les doctrines sociales et politiques de Takî-d-Dîn Aḥmed b. Taimîya* (Cairo, 1939).
Mâwardî	Mâwardî (d. 1058), *al-Aḥkâm as-sulṭâniyya*, ed. M. Enger, as *Mawerdii constitutiones politicae* (Bonn, 1853); trans. E. Fagnan, *Mawerdi: Les statuts gouvernementaux* (Alger, 1915).
Niẓâm al-Mulk	Niẓâm al-Mulk (d. 1092), *Siyâsat-Nâmah*, ed. trans. C. Schefer (Paris, 1891–97).
Sabine	G. H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory* (2d ed.; New York, 1950).
Siyâsa	Ibn Taimiyya, *Siyâsa sharʿiyya*, trans. H. Laoust, *Le traité de droit public d'Ibn Taimîya* (Beirut, 1948).

1. Cf. Siyâsa, p. 20: "Les fonctions publiques doivent avoir pour fin dernière de tendre à améliorer la condition religieuse des hommes. E. Pritsch, "Die islamische Staatsidee," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, LIII (1939), poignantly terms religion the "staatsbildende Prinzip" in Islam which makes for the "grundsätzliche Einheit der politischen und religiösen Gemeinschaft" (pp. 36 and 71).

2. Cf. Ghazzâlî, II, 283: ḥisba as *al-quṭb al-aʿẓam fi 'd-dîn*. This is a development from Koran 3:100; it is generally held to be a personal obligation, *farḍ ʿain* (thus Mâwardî, p. 404/513; Ghazzâlî, II, 288 ff.). Ḥisba, p. 53, looks upon it as a collective duty, *farḍ kifâya*—an attenuation dictated by considerations of public order. The history of the *al-amr bi'l-maʿrûf* formula needs to be traced. (Some Islamic material is collected in A. J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed* [Cambridge, 1932], pp. 106 f.) St. Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* IV, iv, 6, considers *et bona docere et mala dedocere* as the first duty of the *divinarum scripturarum tractator et doctor*, the *defensor rectae fidei ac debellator erroris*—a suggestive parallel, the common basis of which may be looked for in Stoic natural law whose objective and universal validity is here restated in terms of a universal personal obligation.

3. Cf. Ḥisba, p. 6. The obligation of the ḥisba (but not the term) is included in the five fundamental theses of the Muʿtazila. Cf. Ashʿart (d. 935), *Maqâlât al-islâmiyyîn*, ed. H. Ritter (Istanbul, 1929–30), p. 278: "The Muʿtazila are agreed (al-Aṣamm dissenting) on the obligatoriness of *al-amr bi'l-maʿrûf wa'n-nahy ʿan al-munkar* if its execution is possible; it may be done by tongue, hand or sword—whichever way one is able." It deserves notice that al-Aṣamm, the lone dissenter (d. 850), held an official position as judge under the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim (833–42). The same al-Aṣamm is referred to by Ghazzâlî as the sole representative of the view that the *umma* can dispense with an *imâm;* cf. I. Goldziher, *Der Islam*, VI (1916), 173–77.

4. This is well brought out by Mâwardî, pp. 404-32/513-53. Functionally and probably historically, the *muḥtasib* is the successor of the *agoranomos* of the Greek and Hellenistic cities. For a convenient summary of the *agoranomos*' duties cf. J. Oehler, "*Agoranomoi*" in Pauly and Wissowa, *Realenzyklopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (1893), I, 883–85. Outside of Egypt where they were chiefly notaries, " . . . erstreckt sich ihre Competenz auf den Marktplatz selbst, . . . Ferner haben sie die Aufsicht über den Verkehr am Markte, besonders den Kleinhandel; . . . Ihre Aufsicht äusserte sich in der Sorge für die *eukosmia* und das *me apseudein* durch Aufrechterhaltung der Ordnung. Schlichtung von Streitigkeiten zwischen

Verkäufern und Käufern, Untersuchung der Waren nach Qualität und Quantität, Überwachung des Gebrauchs richtiger Masse und Gewichte, überhaupt durch Erlassung einer bestimmten Marktordnung über Zeit und Ort des Verkaufes. . . . In Processen, die sich auf ihren Wirkungskreis bezogen, hatten sie den Vorsitz; . . ." G. Vajda, *Journal Asiatique* (1948), 325, saw the connection between *agoranomos* and *muḥtasib*, but failed to note the different basis of the two offices and the different manner in which they are integrated in their respective social systems.

5. Already Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d. 757) clearly defines the caliph's power in this vein (*Risâla fî 'ṣ-ṣaḥâba*, in: Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlî, *Rasâʾil al-bulaghâ* [3d ed.; Cairo, 1365/1946], pp. 121–22; similar though less specific, the Syrian jurisconsult, Auzâʿî [d. 774]; cf. J. Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* [Oxford, 1950], p. 119). It should be noted in this connection that the division of governmental powers in legislative, judiciary, and executive is not to be found in Islamic public law and is used here only for the sake of convenience. Muḥammad ʿAbduh, *Tafsîr* (Cairo, 1324–54/1906–35), IV, 185–92; V, 443, 465–66, tried not very convincingly to trace the division to the Koran.

6. Cf. the characteristic passage, *Siyâsa*, p. 88 (trans., p. 601).

7. For the Spanish ideal of *los abastos*, cf. M. J. Bonn, *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, VII, 607. The consciousness of economic aims, characteristic of the Mercantilistic period, coexisted in Spain with other motivations of imperialism, viz., "the conviction that the duty of civilized nations is to undertake the political, economic and religious tutelage of more primitive peoples; the eager willingness of government and people to perform this duty and to accept the material rewards involved" (J. H. Parry, *The Spanish Theory of Empire in the Sixteenth Century* [Cambridge, 1940], p. 1).

In his study "The Sociology of Imperialism," in *Imperialism and Social Classes* (New York, 1951), pp. 3–130 (appeared first in *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, XLVI [1918/19], 1–39, 275–310, as "Zur Soziologie der Imperialismen") J. Schumpeter defines imperialism as "the objectless disposition on the part of a state to unlimited forcible expansion" (p. 7). In discussing the motivations of Muslim expansion (pp. 45–56) Schumpeter emphasizes the secondary character of the warlike teaching of Islam, relative to the warlike traditions of the Arabs that formed the first Muslim community (and whose background he analyzes with considerable sagacity). The will to conquer of a specifically religious community remains fundamentally mere will to convert the nonbelievers. "In the course of this mission of conversion and in the political interests of the Church, the military subjugation of one country by another might on occasion be desirable, but it was never an end in itself. . . . What needed to be spread was the rule of dogma and the corresponding organization of religious, not political, life. In this process natural instincts of pugnacity could be vented only incidentally and rarely. This is clearly seen from the characteristic fact that the devoutly Catholic Spaniards never dreamed of giving a religious motivation to their overseas conquests, though these conquests did indeed serve the interests of the Church" (pp. 53–54). Schumpeter recognizes the fact that Islam did actually expand its area through conversion, especially in India and under the Mongols. "But this does not change our diagnosis of Arab imperialism" (p. 55, n.).

8. Cf. Max Scheler's remarks on medieval thinking, *Die Wissensformen und die Gesellschaft* (Leipzig, 1926), p. 133.

9. The quotation is from Sabine, p. 192.

10. Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, a secretary of state, failed in his attempt to persuade the caliph Manṣûr (754–75) to eliminate, for reasons of administrative convenience, disagreement in matters of religion and law. In this proposal, Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, a Persian but recently converted to Islam, took up a tradition of Sassanian statecraft; cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 126–27, and Schacht, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

To Constantine the Great (d. 337) religious uniformity was possible of attainment because of his (fundamentally Stoic) belief in the oneness of human reason, and it was politically necessary because of its concomitant, the absolute validity of the right world order, the *koinos nomos* of any human society; cf. Eusebios of Caesarea, *Vita Constantini* II, 65, and F. Kampers, "Rex et sacerdos," *Historisches Jahrbuch*, XLV (1925), 502-3.

11. Cf. the works of the Shâfi'ites, Mâwardî and Ibn Jamâ'a, the Ḥanbalites, Abû Ya'lâ and Ibn Taimiyya, and the Shî'ite, Ḥillî.

In Ibn Ḥaldûn's work social grouping as such is discussed before the different types of community leadership such as *mulk* and *ḥilâfa* are investigated.

Mâwardî's and Ḥillî's definitions of the *imâma* may follow as illustrations and as indications of the sharply contrasting approach of Sunna and Shî'a to the problem of rulership.

Mâwardî, p. 5. "L'institution de l'imâmat a pour raison d'être qu'il supplie le prophétisme pour la sauvegarde de la religion et l'administration des intérêts terrestres." It is then described as a necessary institution. The character of the necessity of the *imâma* as rational or canonical is under dispute.

Ḥillî, Section 174 on p. 62. "The Imâmate is a universal authority in the things of religion and of the world belonging to some person and derived from the prophet. And it is necessary according to reason. For the *imâmate* is a kindness (from Allâh; *luṭf*), and we know absolutely that when men have a chief and a guide whom they obey, who avenges the oppressed of his oppressor and restrains the oppressor from his oppression, then they draw near to soundness and depart from corruption."

12. The judge Abû 'Alî at-Tanûḥî (d. 994), *Nishwâr al-muḥâḍara*, ed. trans. D. S. Margoliouth (London, 1921-22), p. 114[2] (trans., p. 123), observes: "The ruin of the judicature in a state means the ruin of that state."

13. Cf. *Ḥisba*, p. 55; G. E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam. A Study in Cultural Orientation* (2d. ed.; Chicago, 1953), pp. 168 f., for quotations from Ghazzâlî and Ibn Jamâ'a. For the concurring Iranian tradition, cf. Abû Manṣûr at-Tha'âlibî (the famous philologist; d. 1038), *Histoire des rois des Perses*, ed. trans. H. Zotenberg (Paris, 1900), p. 483. (This history was written before 1021; for the authorship of the work, cf. F. Rosenthal, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, LXX [1950], 181 f.)

14. For the characteristic attitude toward the unjust ruler of Pope Gregory the Great (590-604), cf. Sabine, p. 194. For Seneca's view, cf. *Ad Lucilium* lxxiii.

15. *Siyâsa*, p. 2 (trans., p. 598). Cf. *Ḥisba*, p. 55, the reference to the Mu'tazilite view that extends *ḥisba* to the duty of *qitâl al-a'imma;* and p. 87, Ibn Taimiyya's own view that one should not obey anyone *fî ma'ṣiyat Allâh*. This doctrine goes back to the seventh century A.D.

16. Cf. Ghazzâlî, II, 306-10—of the eight degrees, *darajât*, of the *ḥisba* only the first two are applicable against the ruler.

17. His intervention is well illustrated by the stories told by Ghazzâlî, II, 320-34.

18. Cf. Mâwardî, pp. 272-307, 333-77, on the different legal situations prevailing in different parts of the empire.

19. To reconcile theory and practice, Ibn Taimiyya gives the sovereign the qualification of a *mujtahid* (Laoust, p. 228). After the fall of Baghdâd in 1258, the caliph in Cairo represents the desire of public law to secure the continued validity of community life; cf. Laoust, pp. 45-48.

20. This concept of rulership did not, of course, preclude, either in Islam or in Christendom, popular belief in the charismatic character of the prince.

21. In early Arabic *ḥalîfa*, caliph, means "protector," which is also the meaning of the word in Koran 38:25, the very passage from which the later theologians deduced the concept of the caliph as the successor or vicegerent of the Prophet and, in

later usage, of God; cf. I. Goldziher, *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, XXXV (1897), 336 f.

22. Even the best *civitas terrena* cannot, in Augustine's view, ever form part of the *civitas Dei*. The very existence of a state is to be accounted for only as fulfilment of a need created by the essential sinfulness of the human condition. Cf. G. Tellenbach, *Libertas. Kirche und Weltordnung im Zeitalter des Investiturstreites* (Stuttgart, 1935), pp. 35 ff. (with discussion of scholarly views).

23. Ideally, God is the head of the state. His visible representative is the Prophet, whose political and administrative functions have devolved on his legitimate successors. Oligarchic government occurred on rare occasions only to be transformed into the customary monarchy after a short time. Theory never took notice of such developments.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE MUSLIM TOWN

IN HIS *Description of Greece*, Pausanias[1] the Periegete (d. after A.D. 176) comes to speak of Panopeus, "a city of the Phocians, if one can give the name of city to those who possess no government offices, no gymnasium, no theater, no market, no water descending to a fountain [i.e., no piped water supply], but live in bare shelters just like mountain cabins, right on a ravine. Nevertheless, they have boundaries with their neighbors, and even send delegates to the Phocian assembly."

The Arab geographer Yâqût (d. 1229) takes to task the great littérateur al-Ḥarîrî (d. 1122) for describing Barqaʿîd as the *qaṣaba*, or fortified capital of al-Jazîra (upper Mesopotamia), "when actually it is merely a village, *qarya*, in the plain of Mosul, which does not attain to being a town, *madîna*, how much less a *qaṣaba*."[2] The reason for Yâqût's indignation can be seen in the article which he devotes to Barqaʿîd in his *Geographical Dictionary*,[3] where the locality is described as a rotten borough which, some three hundred years before the author's time, used to be of some importance as a halting place on the caravan road from Mosul to Nisibis, but which even then lacked the two indispensable qualifications of township, a *jâmiʿ*, or Friday (service) mosque, and a permanent market (to which the public bath, *ḥammâm*,[4] could be added as a third property often predicated of the regular town).

The principal differences between the classical and the Muslim town are implicit in the statements of the two geographers. The absence of gymnasiums and theaters in the Muslim town is functionally compensated for by the social and the educational aspects of the mosque[5] and, from the eleventh century onward, by the existence of special institutions of legal and religious learning, the *madrasas*, many of them supported by the government. It is, however, significant for the Muslims' outlook on their community that the shouldering of certain educational and cultural obligations is not considered a primary requirement of the body politic. The absence of the government house from the list of the indispensable characteristics of a town would suggest at first blush that the Mus-

lim town is perhaps not to be understood as a body politic at all. In any event, it is not (what the *polis* was) an autonomous association of citizens. A given town may at a given moment enjoy independence or self-government, in the sense that it is not subjected to an outside power of whose territory it forms but one part. Sovereignty and freedom may fall to it accidentally, as it were; self-government with executive officials designated by the full citizens there never could be, for the city constituted not a closed corporation, a share in which defines the citizen, but merely a functionally unified, administrative entity with a more or less stable complement of settlers or inhabitants. To such cities Plato's characterization of certain states as "merely aggregations of men dwelling in cities who are the subjects and servants of a part of their own state"[6] could fittingly be applied. There were no qualifications to be met to obtain admission to citizenship in the Muslim town for the simple reason that there was no body of town dwellers in whom political or civic authority was seen to reside.

To the Muslim, a town was a settlement in which his religious duties and his social ideals could be completely fulfilled. Canon Law permits performance of the obligatory communal prayer in the open air, and it does not prescribe for its validity a minimum of participants. The community prayer of the Friday noon service, however, may be held only in a fixed settlement with a permanent population, of whom at least forty legally responsible men must be present to make the ceremony valid.[7] In the later period the consensus of the learned seems to have insisted that the Friday prayer should take place under a roof in a fully walled mosque.

It is obvious that the stipulations of the Friday service exclude the nomad from full participation in the ritual of his faith. This fact is but one of the many traits that characterize Islam as a religion of the townspeople, at least in the sense that it tends to favor the settler over the nomad. The prophet Muḥammad himself was born into the most highly developed urban community of contemporary Arabia. The appeal of his message was in large measure due to its appropriateness to the urban situation. Culturally speaking, the largish Arabian settlements such as the commercial city of Mecca or the primarily agricultural agglomeration of Medina had remained under Bedouin influence, that is to say, they had not been able to develop an ethics and an intellectuality of their own with which they would have dared openly to defy the traditional nomad ideals. Islam, with its legislative norms tailored to fit the

needs of a commercial community, with its disparagement of the religiously lukewarm Bedouin and its corresponding high valuation of the transition to the sedentary life, and, above all, with its (ideal) substitution of religious affiliation for kinship as the rationale of social organization, brought the townsman into his own. In the conquests that led to the establishment of the Muslim empire the Bedouins furnished the rank and file of the armies, but the command lay overwhelmingly with the urban circles of Medina and Mecca.

Classical antiquity could not separate civilization from city life. It was the cities that secured conquered territories for Hellenism. Islam, too, needed the city as a base, and it needed it as the only locale in which the correct life as prescribed by the book of God and the Prophet's Tradition could be lived out to the full. The typical conflict of the Hellenistic city was with the suzerain king who had direct control over the not-citified territories in which the cities stood out like islands in the sea. The conflicts, in which the Muslim cities were typically involved were, on the other hand, imperial and dynastic struggles of which, for one reason or another, they had become the stage. Even as in the modern West, the cities were but one part of a ruler's possessions but, other than in the West, they were legally on the same footing with the surrounding territories (and not marked out by any special privilege), even though in actual fact they would often constitute the most important sections of a given state.

For the Greek and the Roman, state and government as such did not require justification. The state is prior to the individual and only within a state can the distinctively humane in man be adequately developed. The city-state, with its virtually complete self-sufficiency (which is an end and a chief good), exists for the good life which is inseparable from law and justice.[8]

In Islam, where the purpose of man is seen in the correct service of God which is to secure him eternal felicity, the primary purpose of government is the rendering possible of such service. The foremost duty of the believer is "to command the good and to prohibit the bad,"[9] the so-called *ḥisba*, and it is as an extension of the *ḥisba* concept that the executive branch of government can most readily be construed and justified. Thus the enforcement of the law and the prevention of its contravention is "the main pivot of the faith, the high purpose for which God sent His prophets. If He permitted any neglect of it sin would become widespread and the world would

be laid waste."[10] Man must reflect "that the punishment of the other world will be painful" and that "when you stand in the presence of Allah [on judgment day] there is but reprobation and the balance [on which your deeds are weighed], but the Garden and the Fire."[11] "And whosoever institutes a bad tradition its burden will be upon him as well as the burden of anyone who acts in accordance with it, to the day of resurrection; and whosoever institutes a good tradition will have his reward for it and the reward of those (will be credited to him) who act in accordance with it to the day of resurrection."[12] Such is the atmosphere in which the Muslim lives, a citizen of the *umma Muḥammadiyya* but a mere resident of his town.

The division of towns into "spontaneous" and "created," of which the French *urbanistes* are so fond,[13] may be usefully applied in a survey of the Muslim towns as long as it is realized that those very numerous cities which the Muslim conquerors took over are, from their point of view, to be classified as spontaneous, that is, as settlements on the original location, purpose, and structure of which they did not have any influence. Persia with Transoxiana as well as the erstwhile Roman or Byzantine territories had been highly urbanized and in the more outlying or less securely held areas the Arabs felt an understandable reluctance to settle in the ancient towns as a minority exposed to the hostilities of alien subjects. The first towns, therefore, which the Arabs "created" were armed camps planted in loosely controlled country, sometimes in the neighborhood of an older urban center (thus, Fusṭāṭ or Old Cairo, near the Roman fortress of Babylon, south of the ancient town of On [Heliopolis]), sometimes in relative isolation from competing settlements (thus, Kûfa in ʿIrâq or Qairawân in the Ifrîqiya). The political situation might induce a sovereign to force a recalcitrant town into submission by erecting a rival in its very vicinity (thus Manṣûra, founded by the Merînids in the fourteenth century to replace Tlemcen, barely one and a half miles away, as their capital, when the latter had been occupied by the Ziyânids). A newly founded town served to symbolize the power which it helped to consolidate. So Baghdâd became the spiritual as well as the political center of the Abbasid caliphate. The building of Fez crowned the rise of the Idrîsids (ninth century), and Marrâkesh, the "southern capital" of Morocco (founded in 1062 by Yûsuf b. Tâshfîn), came into being as the administrative base of the Almoravids. On occasion a sovereign might find it desirable to remove his residence

from the traditional capital as did Mu'taṣim, who built Samarra about seventy miles north of Baghdâd, which for some fifty years (836 to 889) was to remain the seat of the caliphs; or at least he might wish to free himself from direct supervision by his subjects by erecting a princely town just beyond the outreach of the capital proper. Raqqâda, an Aghlabid residence founded at a distance of six miles from Qairawân in 876 to replace a similar town, 'Abbâsiyya, which had been constructed only two and a half miles out of Qairawân in 800, and Madînat az-Zahrâ', which 'Abdarraḥmân III (912–61) founded four and a half miles outside Cordova, will exemplify this type of "created" towns. Such "private" towns would normally be deserted by the founders' successors and would rapidly fall into decay.

A "created" town might serve the consolidation of the empire at the frontiers as well as in the heart lands. Border forts would in course of time grow into fortress towns. Rabat, the present administrative capital of Morocco, preserves in its name the memory of its origin as a *ribâṭ*, or "fortified" monastery. Sûs and Monastîr on the Tunisian coast are impressive representatives of this type.

On the other hand, such urban agglomerations as would develop around a sanctuary, the hermitage or the tomb of a saint, must be viewed as "spontaneous" developments, since they would on the whole evolve without systematic planning on the part of a governmental body (as did Meshhed, the present capital of Khurasan) and, on occasion, even against the wish of a ruler. This was the case of Kerbela, which owes its existence as a town to the presence in its precinct of the grave of Ḥusain, the grandson of the Prophet and (with his father 'Alî) the major hero of Shî'ite Islam (d. 680), and which the caliph Mutawakkil (847–61) had destroyed for political reasons in 850/1.

The full-fledged Muslim town, as has been said before, has two focal points—the Friday mosque and the market. The *jâmi'*, as the spiritual center, is in general appropriately placed along the main thoroughfare or, where the plan of the town permits, at the rectangular crossing of the two main thoroughfares which is marked by a spread-out square. The analogy with *cardo, decumanus*, and *forum* of the Roman town is obvious. Next to the *jâmi'* we find the principal government building, be it the palace of the ruler or the official residence of his deputy. The *jâmi'* is the political as well as the religious center of the settlement. Here it is where the inhabitants will gather to hear the proclamations of their rulers, and

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while they will not debate and vote, they will, on occasion, demonstrate their political will by their tumultuous presence, or again, as effectively, by their demonstrative absence.[14] In any event, it is in the Cathedral Mosque that the *ḫaṭîb* or preacher calls down every Friday the Lord's blessing on the ruler, the mention of whose name in the *ḫuṭba*, or religious address, constitutes an acknowledgment of his sovereignty, while its omission would imply his deposition. The mosque is also the intellectual center of the town. The *fuqahâ* and *ʿulamâ* will assemble in it to discuss and teach; in cities famed for their learned, the circles of students grouped around the *shaikh* leaning against a column in the court of the mosque give the building its cachet between prayer times. Thus its very location will characterize Muslim erudition as primarily inspired by religious concerns.[15]

Ibn Baṭṭûṭa, when visiting the Muslim quarter of a Chinese town, observes that its market is arranged exactly as in the towns of the *dâr al-Islâm*.[16] And, as a matter of fact, the markets or *aswâq* (plural of *sûq*), do exhibit everywhere in Islamic lands the same general structure. For one thing, the producers or retailers of the same kind of goods will always occupy adjacent stalls; in fact, each trade is likely to have one of the market lanes completely to itself. More important still, the order in which the several trades follow one another in the layout of the market is apt to be substantially the same wherever we go in Muslim territory. "Near the mosque as a religious center we will find the suppliers of the sanctuary, the *sûq* of the candle merchants, the dealers in incense and other perfumes. Near the mosque as an intellectual center we will find also the *sûq* of the booksellers, the *sûq* of the bookbinders, and, as its neighbor, the *sûq* of the leather merchants and the makers of slippers," all of whom are in one way or another concerned with leather goods. Adjoining this group of markets we enter the halls of the dealers in textiles, the *qaiṣariyya*, the only section of the *sûqs* which is regularly roofed and which can be locked and where, therefore, precious materials other than fabrics will also be stored and exchanged. It is certain that the *qaiṣariyya* was developed from the Byzantine *basilike;* it is likely that the market halls of Antioch were its immediate model. In considering the importance given to the *qaiṣariyya* within the Muslim market as a whole, it is well to remember not only that throughout the Middle Ages Muslim weavers excelled in their craft but that, generally speaking, the textile industry was the dominant industry of the times in

much the same manner in which at present the metal-working industries dominate in our economy. Also, the role of the *qaisariyya* as a warehouse for the international trade with the lands of Christendom or with those of the unbelievers of the Far East must not be forgotten. Next to the textile trade the carpenters, locksmiths, and the producers of copper utensils will be located; and somewhat farther from the center, the smiths. "Approaching to the gates [of the town] one will find, apart from the caravanserais for the people from the rural districts, the makers of saddles and those of pack-saddles whose clients are recruited from amongst those very country people. Then the vendors of victuals brought in from the country who sometimes will form a market outside the gates," together with the basket makers, the sellers of spun wool and the like. On the periphery of the town will be situated "such industries as require space and whose vicinity might be considered undesirable; the dyers, the tanners, and almost outside the city limits, the potters."[17] Fairs will be held before the city gates where, in such towns for which the caravan trade is important, an area will be kept open in which the caravans may be assembled and unloaded; elsewhere the boatmen have their section just outside the gates; and everywhere on the glacis beyond the walls singers and storytellers will gather large groups of listeners about them. But not only the economic life of the town reaches out beyond its gates; the religious life continues into the open country where the cemeteries are located and where, as often as not, a saintly man will have his hermitage which, not infrequently, may have grown to be of convent size peopled by disciples and itinerant pious, or *faqîrs*.

In its business district (and in a sense in its "official" section—mosque and government buildings—as well) the unity of the town is apparent; the arrangement of the residential districts reflects the separatist tendencies at work within it. For the unity of the Muslim town is functional, not civic. In their newly founded cities the Arabs would settle by tribes, each tribal quarter to be complete with its own mosque, bath, and, as a rule, its own market.[18] In Baghdâd Persians and Arabs lived apart from the beginning,[19] in Samarra Mu'taṣim saw to it that the natives of Ferghâna and the Turks occupied separate quarters without direct contact with the Arab population,[20] in Tlemcen the tension between the "autochthonous" Ḥaḍrî and the descendants of the Turkish janissaries, the Qulughlî, has remained alive to this very day.[21] Not infrequently, the individual quarters are walled and their gates locked

during the night to counteract the insecurity of the town which is, after all, due in large measure to the perennial interquarter animosities. Within the quarters there is hardly any open space or square to relieve the narrowness of their streets and byways. The Muslim house is oriented away from the street; it receives its light from an inner court, and the complex of its constituent buildings is so arranged as to secure a maximum of privacy to its inhabitants. This desire for privacy, which is the outgrowth of the social mores demanding as complete a withdrawal from the public as possible of the women of the family, inspires the insistence that windows and roofs must be constructed in such a way as to prevent anyone's intruding unseen into the intimacy of his neighbors' lives. For the same reason, house doors on opposite sides of a street may not face each other.

The loyalty of the townsman belongs to his family group and after this to the ethnic or denominational unit which shares his quarter. The tolerated minorities occupy their own sections of town, with the Jews, for better protection, frequently living in the immediate vicinity of the government area. The occupants of the several quarters will meet typically but in market and mosque; in the market the minorities may have their place, perhaps not with, but close to, their Muslim colleagues, although more often than not crafts will be traditionally in the hands of the one or the other group rather than shared.

In Iran and in Turkestan the original layout of the city would be somewhat different. "The pre-Islamic towns of these countries comprise a citadel (*diz*) and the town proper," the *shahristān*, the "place of power." The market or *bāzār* was outside the walls of the *shahristān*, in the *bêrûn* (Arabic *rabaḍ*), which in some instances appears to have been enclosed by a second wall. "Under the Arabs life gradually passed from the *shahristān* to the suburbs which were the place of residence of the representatives of the industrial and commercial classes." Within the *arbāḍ* gradually the universal pattern came to prevail, "with *bāzārs* running along the principal streets, crossing the town from east to west and from north to south, and where on the crossroads the market place contained the principal mosque."[22]

In comparing the map of a typical Muslim town with that of its Hellenistic predecessor in the same location, one is struck with the persistence of the general features: the mosque has taken the place of *forum* or *agora*, but the city walls still delimit an area which is

organized about the ancient system of co-ordinates. At the same time, one will be impressed with the thoroughness with which the Hellenistic checkerboard structure has been rendered ineffective by the build-up of the individual quarters.[23] It is not that the Hellenistic and Roman gridiron plan had been preserved down to the Muslim conquest. As a matter of fact, the decomposition of the checkerboard had in some places begun as early as the second century A.D. (if not sooner). During the Byzantine period the gradual forsaking of the geometric block structure had become an accomplished fact in towns like Damascus and Aleppo.[24] But the development was consummated under the Muslim domination, and what had been the haphazard result of the infiltration of Orientals into the population of the town became now the adequate expression of the mores backed by a definite religious outlook on social relations. The ancient political interest in the community, the classical ideals of city-oneness and of the clarity of the architectural (and administrative) design have been replaced by a dominant religious interest, by ideals of quarter or group loyalty, by the desire to shield the family group from dispersal and contamination, and by the concept of government as an outside agency with which one no longer identifies but which one rather wishes to keep at arm's length from the spheres of one's personal and familiar life.

It is not surprising, then, that the residents of the Muslim town did not develop their own administrative machinery, but that the administrative framework, including the appointment of (at least) the important officials, was imposed by the state, that is, by the personal will of the ruler or his deputy. In appreciating this situation we should perhaps remind ourselves of the fact that "what is today considered the most elementary duty of any government, the maintenance of law and order, seems, from the absence of references to it, to have been almost ignored by the Hellenistic cities. There was indeed in Ptolemaic Alexandria a commander of the night watch, but he was probably a royal officer; and in general police functions in cities governed by kings seem to have been fulfilled by their commandants."[25]

The apparent inconsistencies which we observe in the administration of any major Muslim town in which there does not exist any code regulating the competence of government and citizenry are due largely to a concept of rulership which fails to set clear-cut limits to the executive and which, at the same time, seems to as-

sume that, where the government fails to interfere, more or less informal, traditional bodies will take charge. Thence the impression of jerkiness, of whimsicality, and, at any rate, of arbitrariness which is provoked by the spectacle of the frequent shifts from an extreme laissez-faire to an equally extreme regime of state controls—shifts which in our sources are presented as the result of some prince's or high official's justice or cruelty, if they are not described merely as spurts of energy which may subside as unaccountably as they arose.

For under the overlay of the state structure there would continue to exist a rudimentary organization in the quarters, which, in general, simply continued the tribal custom of accepting the guidance of the *sayyid;* in addition, the professionals, following the later classical and Byzantine corporative tradition, would constitute a rather large number of guild-like associations within which each individual, not excluding beggars, thieves, and prostitutes, would find a place and a certain measure of protection against the hardships of the economic life as well as against governmental negligence or oppression. These guilds, which can be traced back into the ninth century A.D., were fairly numerous. We have no figures from the Middle Ages, but the handbooks of the *muḥtasib* show a proliferation of the crafts: in 1640 Evliya Efendi counted in Constantinople six hundred corporations grouped in twenty-four classes;[26] as late as 1923, Fez had something like one hundred and sixty-four; Marrâkesh, one hundred and fifteen; Meknes, one hundred and six corporations.[27] The guild members—an entrance oath of the new member is known since *ca.* A.D. 850[28]— recognized the authority of one of their own group; the government would confirm this *shaikh* or *naqîb,* who at times inherited his office, or might impose their own nominee. At certain periods the government, while leaving the individual merchant guilds to their own devices, would set one merchant over them all as the responsible middleman between itself and the commercial community. Similarly, the government would be prepared to recognize the *de facto* authority of the leading personality of a city quarter, although the appointment on the part of the ruler of a "precinct master" or *shaikh al-ḥâra* can also be documented.[29] The corporations would maintain bylaws to insure "fair trading" and a certain amount of assistance for the victims of misfortune and unemployment. Guild life would provide an opportune basis for the development of religious activities; throughout their traceable history the corpora-

tions have taken a deep interest in the devotional life; in general their sympathies seem to have been, on the one hand, with the more extreme movements of Shiʿism and, on the other, with the representatives of mystical piety. Very occasionally the guilds seem to have offered the framework for a civic militia. In the agitated period of the eleventh through thirteenth centuries, the *aḥdāth* played a not inconsiderable part in the history of towns as important as Damascus and Aleppo, and their head, or *raʾīs*, rose to be one of the most effective personages in the community. In general, however, the notables of the town, whose body would include at least some of the local Alids and Abbasids, lacked the possibility to take the political initiative. It was through them that the townspeople did homage to a new ruler, and it was through them that the ruler learned of common grievances or, conversely, would convey his orders to the residents. What influence they had was due to their prestige rather than to any active resistance which they could have organized beyond the customary closing of the markets as a sign of protest and in self-protection.

The prince, or more often the governor appointed by him, is the executive head of the town. His prerogatives and duties are not restricted, except that he is not qualified to sit in judgment in the religious court. It is his privilege to appoint his assistants, including the *qāḍī* and the *muḥtasib*, on whom, in practice, most of the town's business will devolve. By and large, it is customary to allow Muslim officials the selection of their own aides, but they may be limited in their choice of personnel by restrictive statutes such as that which (in theory) precludes the investiture of a *dimmī* with executive authority over Muslims, or that other which compels the *qāḍī* to take his *ʿudūl*, or "witnesses," from a previously established list of qualified persons. More often than not, the governor is a military man. It is, however, worthy of notice that a situation is none too rare in which the *qāḍī* emerges (with or without a governor by his side) as the actual regent of the town. In assessing the *qāḍī*'s position it must be remembered that he is the trustee of the pious foundations whose proceeds serve to defray the upkeep of mosques, *madrasas*, and miscellaneous public services such as fountains or hospitals.

The governor or his delegate presides over the *maẓālim* jurisdiction, that is, the police court or court of torts, which takes care of cases that do not come under Canon Law, or which, for one reason or another, it appears expedient to have dealt with administra-

tively rather than by the procedure laid down by the *sharí'a*. The governor delegates some of his judicial functions to the *muḥtasib* who, even without those, would be the most important cog in the administration of any town. Functionally, he is the successor of the Hellenistic *agoranomos*. His principal duty is the supervision of the market. He enforces the regulations under which the merchants operate; he sees to the use of correct weights and measures. His authority extends to the producers as well as to the traders. The guilds are under his inspection, and he is responsible for the maintenance of quality as well as of a fair price level. He is empowered to mete out punishment to trespassers on the spot, but he is not to exceed the statutory penalties of the *sharí'a*. His is also the task to settle petty disputes between dealer and customer—his the duty to see to it that the faithful join in prayer at the stipulated hours, that they keep the prescribed fast in the month of Ramaḍân, and, in general, that no one gives offense to his fellows by transgressing the precepts of the religious code or the received mores of the community.[30] For the foundation of the *muḥtasib*'s authority is the injunction "to order what is approved and to prohibit what is reproved," *al-amr bi'l-ma'rúf wa'n-nahy 'an al-munkar*. The upholding of the moral order is his charge, and he acts in its pursuance whether he unmasks a fraudulent craftsman, insists on proper street cleaning, condemns (or invites the judge to condemn) a ramshackle building, compels an owner to tear down a part of his house that protrudes into the street to the detriment of the Muslims, enforces the disabilities which the Law imposes on the *dimmí*'s, or smashes wine jars and musical instruments which some revelers insolently exhibit. He is the guardian of the community's morality, its censor, whose competence can never be unambiguously defined, not only because the nature and extent of immorality will vary but also because the community will not always show the same degree of sensitivity to every trespass.

It is true that Muslim law, "in its horror of exemptive privileges,"[31] does not concede a special status to the town. The Law knows the *umma*, the community of the faithful, which by definition is one and indivisible. Thus, as we have indicated at the outset, the state has nothing to offer that would take the place of ancient municipal institutions or legislations. Yet it would be erroneous to conclude from this deliberate blindness of Muslim public law that the Muslim legists did neglect the town and its specific problems altogether. The manuals of the *ḥisba* would suffice by

themselves to make such a view untenable. To quote somewhat at random from our sources: Mâwardî (d. 1058), in detailing the obligations of the *muḥtasib*, explains:

In matters of worldly concern the jurisdiction may have to do with the general public or with individuals. Examples of the former are: failure of water supply, ruinous city walls, or the arrival of needy wayfarers whom the people of the place fail to provide for; in such case, if there be money in the treasury no constraint is needed, and the *muḥtasib* may order the water supply to be put right and the walls repaired, and may relieve the wayfarers on their passage, all this being chargeable on the treasury and not on the inhabitants, as are also dilapidations in mosques. But if the treasury be without funds, then these liabilities fall on all inhabitants of substance, but not on any one of them specifically, and if such persons act, the *muḥtasib's* right of compulsion is at an end.[32]

Elsewhere the same author states that,

matters of a purely world nature, such as encroaching on a neighbor's boundary or on the privacy of his abode (*ḥarîm*), or extending beams beyond his outside wall, give no occasion for interference until complaint by the neighbor, who alone is entitled either to condone the act or to impeach it, in which case the *muḥtasib* may act, provided the two neighbors be not actually at law, and may compel the person at fault to desist and may punish him as the case may require; if they be at law, the judge must act.[33]

Discussions of this kind clearly presuppose the existence of a fairly elaborate set of customary regulations.

But we need not confine ourselves to inferences, for it has recently been shown[34] that the Canon Lawyers themselves attended to problems that are peculiar to town life. Building regulations have come under their purview as well as questions connected with the use of public and private roads,[35] the duty to repair walls endangering the public safety, and comparable matters. Those topics are dealt with per se, that is to say, not within a general treatment of the city and its legal difficulties, yet they are dealt with at considerable length and with as considerable competence. The existence in ninth-century Baghdâd of intricate legal and customary regulations regarding the relationship between a landlord and his tenant is revealed by a letter of one al-Kindî[36] to a tenant of his, which Jâḥiẓ inserted in full in his *Book of the Misers*.[37] The tenant in question had allowed a cousin of his with his son to stay with him, whereupon Kindî immediately raised his rent proportionately, that is to say, he charged him 40 dirham (per month) for eight persons when he had previously asked 30 for six. In explanation he points to the added wear, to the increased need for servicing the

latrines, and so on. Swerving from his immediate concern, Kindî
discusses the problems of the landlord in general and, while it is
apparent that his avarice induces him to contrive arguments
against his tenant as against all tenants, the reality of those prob-
lems and their being taken note of by law are evident. In the con-
centration of the lawgiver on cases as they arise and in his fore-
going the opportunity to round out his rulings into a city statute,
the pragmatic nature of much of Muslim jurisprudence is as clearly
discernible as its reluctance to set up special areas of jurisdiction.

In the ancient town, to become a citizen a recent settler had to
obtain admission into the register of the citizenry; in Islam there
existed no impediment of this kind to participation in urban life.
After the first urge to move into towns which animated the early
invaders had subsided, the recruitment of the population for newly
founded cities came to be largely the responsibility of the founding
dynast. Forcible transfer of populations was not unusual. Elements
of different local or ethnic origin would establish themselves in
separate quarters, and thus the ground would be laid for that lack
of civic cohesion which became typical of a majority among the
larger Muslim towns.[38] The dynast would bring with him a sizable
section of his supporters—more often than not members of an as
yet not urbanized group or else slaves imported from areas mar-
ginal to the *dâr al-Islâm*. Merchants, craftsmen, and laborers
would tend to settle about the seat of the rising political power;
craftsmen especially would be sought out eagerly by the rulers and
lured or moved to the residence under varying degrees of compul-
sion. The influx of slaves would reach noticeable proportions. The
realization that, generally speaking, the civilization of Islam was
less dependent upon slave labor than that of the Greeks and the
Romans had been, should not mislead the observer (as has fre-
quently happened) into almost discounting the role which unfree
labor did play in Muslim economic and social life. Throughout and
beyond the Middle Ages the slave trade retained its importance;
the slave soldier and the slave concubine were lasting features of
the Islamic scene.

The Islamic town did not represent a uniform type of civilized
life as had the Greek or Roman town. Of Hellenism it has been
said that its spread "through the Near East was to a large extent
the produce of imitation, and the place of any city in the scale of
civilization was gauged by its success in reproducing the culture
of the universally acknowledged archetype, the cities of the Aegean

basin."[39] A similar statement in which, say, Mecca or even Baghdâd would be assigned the place of the archetype would not be equally true of the world of Islam except in so far as the religious and instructional centers would become normative by presenting the Muslims with articulated models of a way of life. Deliberate imitation of a superior cultural standard does occur—polite Cordova allowed itself to be educated by the singer Ziryâb to the style and level of Baghdadian society[40]— but it is rare. On the other hand, the Muslim, unless beguiled by that romanticism which would exalt Bedouin ways, was prone to identify urban life and civilized life as definitely as had his classical predecessors.[41] The city as the seat of power, urbanization as the inevitable concomitant of the rise to power of a nomad and barbarous nation or group, and the succumbing to the twin temptations of rulership and urban culture have been convincingly analyzed by Ibn Ḥaldûn (d. 1406) on the very eve of the great decline of the Muslim world, not the least symptom of which was the shrinking of some of those very towns that had been the greatest pride of Muslim civilization.[42]

NOTES

1. X. iv. 1; trans. W. H. S. Jones (Cambridge, Mass. and London, 1918–35).

2. Yâqût, *Muʿjam al-buldân*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1866–73), I, 5[20–21]; the reference is to Ḥarîrî's *Maqâma Barqaʿîdiyya*, No. 7 in the edition of F. Steingass (London, 1897, pp. 52–58; trans. Th. Chenery and F. Steingass, *Assemblies of al-Ḥarîrî* [London, 1867–98], I, 139–49). Incidentally, Ḥarîrî does not refer to Barqaʿîd as a *qaṣaba* but only as a *madîna;* cf. p. 52[2], where the term is secured by the rhyme.

Muqaddasî, *Aḥsan at-taqâsîm* (written in A.D. 985), ed. M. J. de Goeje, *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum* (hereafter *BGA*) (Leiden, 1906), III, pp. 47 ff., discusses the terminology and distinguishes (*a*) seventeen metropolises, *amṣâr* (sing. *miṣr*); (*b*) seventy-seven fortified provincial capitals, *qaṣabât* (sing. *qaṣaba*); (*c*) provincial towns, *madâʾin* or *mudun* (sing. *madîna*); (*d*) tracts of country, *nawâḥî* (sing. *nâḥiya*); (*e*) villages, *qurà* (sing. *qarya*). Cf. also A. Mez, *The Renaissance of Islam* (English ed.; London, 1937), p. 409. For the different meanings attached to the term *qaṣaba* in scattered areas and periods, cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, II, 782–83, s.v. *Ḳaṣaba;* for the interpretation of the term *miṣr,* cf. C. Pellat, *Le Milieu baṣrien et la formation de Ǧâḥiẓ* (Paris, 1953), p. 2, n. 5.

3. Yâqût, *op. cit.*, I, 571.

4. Doubtless a bequest of the ancients—the term translates the Greek *therma.* Medieval authors are fond of indicating the size of a town by giving the number of its mosques and its (public and private) baths. It must be remembered that Muslim law prescribes total ablution under certain circumstances.

5. Ibn Qutaiba, *ʿUyûn al-Aḥbâr* (Cairo, 1925–30), I, 306[1], quotes the dictum of Idrîs al-Ḥaulânî: *al-masâjid majâlis al-kirâm,* "the mosques are the salons of the noble."

6. Laws 712 D/713 A (Jowett's translation).

7. Whether the *imâm* or prayer leader is to be counted separately is a moot ques-

tion; cf. Ibn Uḫuwwa (d. 1329), *Maʿālim al-qurba*, ed. R. Levy (London, 1938), p. 215 of text, p. 62 of English summary.

8. Cf. Aristotle *Politics* I. i. 8, 11, 12, 1252b–1253a.

9. An injunction developed from Koran 3:100.

10. Ibn Uḫuwwa, *op. cit.*, p. 15 (trans., p. 6).

11. Ibn ʿAbdūn (wrote *ca.* 1200), Treatise on the *ḥisba*, ed. E. Lévi-Provençal, *Journal asiatique*, CCXXIV (1934), 193¹²–¹⁴.

12. *Ibid.*, 252¹–⁵.

13. Cf., e.g., the recent paper by E. Pauty, "Villes spontanées et villes créées en Islam," *Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales, Université d'Alger*, IX (1951), 52–75.

14. Cf. G. Marçais, *Revue d'Alger*, II (1945), 528, on the way in which on a certain occasion the people of Qairawân boycotted the Friday service of their Fâṭimid rulers. For detail, cf. now R. Le Tourneau's article, "La révolte d'Abû Yazîd au Xᵐᵉ siècle," *Cahiers de Tunisie*, No. 2, 1953, p. 8. For a contrasting structure in the West, cf. E. E. Lampard's observation that "(i)t is rare in England that a cathedral dominates the crossroads or the market square"; *The History of Cities in the Economically-Advanced Areas. Some Lessons for Underdeveloped Countries* (mimeographed; Chicago, 1954), p. 43.

15. Yaʿqûbî's (d. 897) description of Samarra (written in 889), *Kitâb al-buldân* (Leiden, 1891), *BGA* VII, pp. 255–68 (trans., G. Wiet, *Yaʿḳûbî, les pays* [Cairo, 1937], pp. 44–63), has been translated and supplemented from other Arabic sources by E. Herzfeld, *Geschichte der Stadt Samarra* (Hamburg, 1948), pp. 86–137. Yâqût, *op. cit.*, I, 848⁷–⁸, quoting Ḥamza al-Iṣfahânî (d. between 961–70), *Annales*, ed. I. M. E. Gottwaldt (St. Petersburg and Leipzig, 1844–48), p. 49 (trans., p. 35), mentions unusual layouts of three towns in Ḫûzistân: Sûs is traced in the figure of a falcon, Tustar in that of a horse, and Jundê Sâbûr in the shape of a chessboard, *ruqʿat ash-shaṭranj*.

16. *Travels*, ed. C. Defrémery and B. R. Sanguinetti (Paris, 1853–58), IV, 281.

17. Cf. Georges Marçais, "L'Urbanisme musulman," *Vᵉ Congrès de la Fédération des Sociétés Savantes de l'Afrique du Nord* (Algiers, 1940), p. 33. Sibṭ b. al-ʿAjamî (d. 1479) records an instance of a *qâḍî* removing a slaughterhouse from a location where it inconvenienced the population; cf. J. Sauvaget, *Matériaux pour servir à l'histoire de la ville d'Alep* (Beirut, 1933–50), II, 54.

18. A detailed description of the manner in which the tribes built up Kûfa is to be found in Yaʿqûbî, *op. cit.*, pp. 310–11 (trans., pp. 141–45). Cf. also L. Massignon, "Explication du plan de Kûfa," *Mélanges Maspéro* (Cairo, 1934–40), III, 337–60.

19. Cf. R. Levy, *A Baghdad Chronicle* (Cambridge, 1929), p. 74.

20. Cf. E. Herzfeld, *op. cit.*, pp. 97–99, and also Yaʿqûbî, *op. cit.*, p. 259 (trans., p. 50).

21. Cf. Marçais, *op. cit.*, p. 30. J. Weulersse, *Comptes rendus du Congrès International de Géographie*, Warsaw, 1934, III (Warsaw, 1937), 258, has this to say on the morphology of contemporary Antioch: "Dans son principe, elle est exactement opposée à celle des cités d'Occident. Comme Alep ou Damas, Antioche n'est pas une ville unie, mais bien plûtot un aggrégat de cités. Entre les communautés qui la composent: Turcs, Chrétiens, Alaouites, aucun point commun; chacune d'entre elles vit à part, avec ses moeurs et ses lois. Non seulement différentes, bien plus, elles sont hostiles. Encore aujourd'hui, l'idée de mariages mixtes apparaît inconcevable. Pas un Alaouite n'oserait entrer dans une mosquée musulmane. Jadis pas un de leurs cheikhs n'aurait pu descendre en ville, le jour de la prière publique, sans risquer de se faire lapider. Pas une manifestation d'une des communautés qui n'apparaisse aux autres comme un défi; et tout ce complexe psychologique se

résume en cette hantise du massacre qui est une des causes déterminantes de la morphologie urbaine en Orient. . . .

"Contraint de vivre dans un milieu si dangereusement instable, on comprend que chacun s'efforce de mener une vie aussi secrète que possible. Chaque communauté se rétracte en son quartier clos, comme un animal en sa carapace.

"De là, cet extraordinaire cloisonnement de la ville en 45 minuscules quartiers, formant comme autant de cellules autonomes, autant de cités dans la cité, avec leur chef civil, le *moukhtar*, leur chef religieux, l'*imam*, leur 'conseil des anciens' et même leur police représentée par les veilleurs de nuit."

22. W. Barthold, *Mussulman Culture* (Calcutta, 1934), pp. 31–32; cf. also Barthold's *Turkestan to the Mongol Invasion*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (2d ed.; London, 1948), p. 78.

23. The difference between the Western and the Muslim towns in terms of the nature of their respective roadnets has been well set forth by L. Torrés Balbás: "Presque toutes celles (i.e., les rues) des villes occidentales (du Moyen-Âge), étaient des voies de passage, qui communiquaient les unes avec les autres par leurs extrémités, sans solution de continuité; elles servaient en même temps à assurer la circulation générale et à donner accès aux habitations qui les bordaient.

"Les villes musulmanes possédaient aussi un certain nombre de voies transversales ou radiales qui mettaient en communication les portes opposées de l'enceinte fortifiée de la Médina et qui se prolongeaient à travers les faubourgs immédiats. Mais sur elles se greffaient des rues étroites et tortueuses d'où partaient à leur tour un grand nombre de ruelles sans issue, qui se ramifiaient à la façon d'un labyrinthe, commes les veines du corps humain." (*Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales, Université d'Alger*, VI [1942–47], 9.)[1]

24. Cf. J. Sauvaget, *Alep* (Paris, 1941), pp. 66–67; compare the maps of Roman and Umayyad Damascus in Sauvaget's "Esquisse d'une histoire de la ville de Damas," *Revue des Études Islamiques* (hereafter *REI*), VIII (1934), 441 (fig. 6), 452 (fig. 8).

25. A. H. M. Jones, *The Greek City from Alexander to Justinian* (Oxford, 1940), pp. 211–12.

26. L. Massignon, *Revue internationale de sociologie*, XXVIII (1920), 483.

27. L. Massignon, *Revue du monde musulman*, LVIII (1924), 3–37. The interesting notes of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *op. cit.*, II, 45, on the guilds and on an age-group society in contemporary Iṣfahān, deserve attention.[2]

28. L. Massignon, *Revue internationale de sociologie*, XXVIII (1920), 485.

29. So, for example, in Ottoman Cairo; cf. H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, I, i (London, New York, Toronto, 1950), p. 279. Occasionally the prince would find himself moved to rely to a greater extent than usual on the active co-operation of the townspeople, who then developed what could have become the basis for an autonomous city government; cf. the somewhat too colorful description of the conditions obtaining in Rayy, *ca.* A.D. 985, by A. Mazahéri, *La vie quotidienne des musulmans au Moyen-Âge (X*–*XIII* *siècle)* (Paris, 1951), p. 105.

30. Cf. Ibn Uḫuwwa, *op. cit.*, pp. 9–11 (trans., pp. 4–5), on the relation of the *muḥtasib's* court to that of the *qāḍī;* Ibn Uḫuwwa follows Māwardī, *al-Aḥkām as-sulṭāniyya*, ed. M. Enger (Bonn, 1853), pp. 405–8 (trans. H. F. Amedroz, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1916, pp. 78–80), who describes the *ḥisba* jurisdiction as intermediate between that of the *qāḍī* and of the *maẓālim* judge.

31. The phrase is Sauvaget's; cf. his *Alep*, p. 73.

32. Māwardī, *op. cit.*, pp. 411–12 (trans., pp. 83–84).

33. *Ibid.*, p. 426 (trans., pp. 95–96). More than 400 years after Māwardī, the

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[1] See note (xx) of appendix. [2] See note (xxi) of appendix.

functions of the *muḥtasib* appear essentially unchanged in the Persian appointment diplomas which ʿAbdallâh Marwârîd al-Bayânî (d. 1516) included in his *inshâ* work, the *Sharaf-Nâmah;* cf. H. R. Roemer, *Staatsschreiben der Timuridenzeit* (Wiesbaden, 1952), pp. 53–57 (translation of documents) and 150–52 (commentary).

34. By R. Brunschvig, "Urbanisme médiéval et droit musulman," *REI*, XV (1947), 137–55; Brunschvig draws his materials primarily from North African authorities of the Mâlikite *madhab*, or school.

35. Concern with transportation or public roads was less pressing than we should expect from the relative narrowness of even the principal thoroughfares in most towns (Samarra and ʿAḍud ad-Daula's [d. 982] Shîrâz were notable exceptions with their wide avenues. But cf. Muqaddasî's criticism of [old] Shîrâz because of its narrow lanes, *ḍîq ad-durûb*, in Yâqût, *op. cit.*, III, 349⁵. Muqaddasî, *BGA*, III, 429⁴, agrees in meaning but not in wording). The Muslim town used for its transport human labor and beasts of burden, but did not have as much recourse to vehicles as did the Greeks and Romans. To my knowledge, Arabic literature does not offer an outcry comparable to Juvenal's humorous and desperate complaint (*Satires* iii. 232–77) about the painful experience of getting around in Rome.

36. It is uncertain whether he is the philosopher (d. 873). F. Rosenthal, *Orientalia*, n.s., XI (1942), 270, n. 3, favors the identification.

37. Ed. G. Van Vloten (Leiden, 1900), pp. 85–99; ed. A. al-ʿAwâmirî and ʿAlî Jârim (Cairo, 1338/1939), I, 145–70; trans. C. Pellat, *Le livre des avares* (Beirut and Paris, 1951), pp. 116–32. The passage is discussed (and in part translated) by F. Gabrieli, *Dal mondo dell'Islàm. Nuovi saggi di storia e civiltà musulmana* (Milan and Naples, 1954), pp. 42–56. Two supplementary anecdotes are told in *ʿUyûn*, III, 258–59.[1]

38. The lack of homogeneity might affect even the economic life to the extent that, according to Ibn Uḫuwwa, *op. cit.*, p. 107 (trans., pp. 26–27), in some cities the *raṭl*, or pound weight, would vary from quarter, *maḥalla*, to quarter. Cf. also the praise which al-Ḥarîrî, *op. cit.*, pp. 390–91 (trans., II, 164), bestows on his own quarter in Baṣra, the *maḥalla* of the Banû Ḥarâm.[2]

39. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

40. Ziryâb arrived in Cordova in A.D. 822.

41. The formulation of H. A. R. Gibb, *Cahiers d'histoire mondiale*, I, i (1953), 53, may be noted here, who sees the urban character of Sunnite culture, "arising out of the association of the orthodox institution with government." This observation is true enough but fails to take into account the nature of Muslim orthodoxy as a product of urban life, which, both as a system of religious precepts and as a way of life, shall be realized only in an urban environment.

42. It would be difficult to overlook the parallelism with the decline of the Western Roman Empire which coincided so characteristically with a process of de-urbanization.

¹ See note (xxii) of appendix.   ² See note (xxiii) of appendix.

ENCOUNTERS

IX

ISLAM AND HELLENISM

ISLAM IS THE LAST of the nostalgia religions. During the thousand years that stretched from the rise of Alexander the Great (336 B.C.) to the death of the prophet Muḥammad (A.D. 632) the principal motivation of worship had been the yearning of man to return to his true home outside of this world of generation and decay and, if possible, to subdue and slough off his worthless human part and redeem his innate divinity while still imprisoned in bodily existence.[1] Revelation replaced reason as the fountainhead of intellectual authority, the existence of evil emerged as the principal emotional preoccupation, man came to view himself as an aggregate of conflicting forces, a battleground of the demoniacal and the divine, the goal of his existence became escape into transcendence, to be in the world but not of it the motto of his conduct.

Three cultural traditions found themselves face to face with this mood. Greek philosophy preserved, in Neo-Platonic pantheism, the essential divinity of the universe; monotheism allowed man to overcome evil through belief in the Saviour who died to conquer sin;[2] oriental dualism, in the ever more intricate Gnostic interpretations of cosmic history, enlisted man in the fight to redeem the light lost in darkness, with his soul both battleground and prize of war.

Institutionalization ensued, in varying degrees, as a concession to the duration of the metaphysical process or, in human terms, so as to preserve the message of redemption and its effective administration over the generations of men all too slowly converted. The uniqueness of the message was emphasized by recognizing its bearer as the last of the prophets. The apprehension of the impending End and, later, the political will of the religious community bade the believers reject subsequent revelations. Muḥammad, like Jesus, the Montanist Maximilla, and Mani, was the last of the Messengers. Like Mani, he was specifically dispatched to his own people, but the universality of his message transcended racial and political boundaries.

When Muḥammad arose, the persuasiveness of the nostalgia

159

impulse was on the wane. The pneumatics and anchorites had been removed from leadership in the Christian churches, most of the Gnostic communities had been absorbed, and Christological controversies exacerbated by national antagonisms had come to divide orthodox from heretic.

Contrary to Gnostic dualism, the monotheistic tradition never could degrade the Creator. Hence his creation always retained some value. Muḥammad no longer felt the disgust with which the Gnostics and the monks had regarded the body. Once man believed in the one Lord, His messenger and message, which taught him to eschew sin, he qualified for Paradise.[3] Fear of the All-Powerful and His Judgment superseded hate of his own lower self as the believer's prime emotion. The split in his personality was healed. Man is no longer possessed by demons of darkness: classical Islam knows no exorcism. Without metamorphosis man may attain to the vision of God. So he craves rescue rather than salvation.[4]

In Gnosticism the fate of man is decided in a cosmic drama which is usually conceptualized in mythological narrative; in Islam, man acts in history, his destiny not prefigured in cosmology but confined to, and determined by, the particular moment in which he walks across the stage to meet his Creator-Judge.

Thus, early and orthodox Islam restricts the intellectual contribution of the postclassical world and from the first establishes a positive relationship to this world which can be organized as the state of God by organizing it as the state of the believers under God. This valuation of the world as a proving-ground is not satisfactory to those who continue to experience their bodily self as their enemy. Ascetics, individually and in groups, keep alive the feeling of sinfulness which in the community at large is gradually decreasing as a motive force in favor of fear of the more and more humanized King of the Universe. In Gnostic thought a transformation of substance vouchsafes the faithful the vision of God, in orthodox Islam it becomes the reward for formal piety and correct behavior. Eschatology retains its fascination for popular imagination, but orthodox theology veers away from it and eliminates *gnosis* and *apokalypsis* as vehicles of cognition.

Thus when confronted with controversies that could not be resolved from koranic data or the authoritative tradition of the Prophet, especially when the problems arose through contact with Christians and Manichaeans, the Muslim thinker had to fall back on what might be called the classical (as against the postclassical,

"Hellenistic," i.e., Orientalized, or Gnosticized) heritage of antiquity. It is perhaps the most important element in the development of Islam and Muslim civilization that they have undergone the influence of these two "sets" of ancient thought and mood.[5]

Under the auspices of the state, Mu'tazilite speculation, drawing on "classical" thought-patterns, combatted the Manichaean dualists, the representatives of (Persianized) "postclassical" Gnosticism. Orthodox and Mu'tazilite theologies were systematized with the aid of Aristotelian concepts; Gnostic and Iranian modes of thought—the dramatization of dualism as well as the representation of the world's metaphysical structure through hierarchic personification of the constituent forces which are fundamentally hypostatized qualities of God[6]—were rejected as uncongenial. This theology centered on the nature of God and His word; Manichaeanism (as all postclassical thought) had started from the nature, and condition, of man. Orthodox Islam restricted, if it did not reject, *allegoresis* as a scientific method, again in direct opposition to the postclassical tradition. Even in the externals of the technique of controversy, it preferred the Hellenistic to the Iranian pattern.[7]

. Mysticism, on the other hand, kept alive the "postclassical" tradition, both its concepts (as far as they were compatible with the state-indorsed orthodox position) and its emotional goal. Not only did it make its own the postclassical concentration on anthropology rather than on cosmology (or theology), but it proposed to guide the individual to union with God which, as in the Hellenistic mysteries and in Gnosticism, implied the (at least momentary) deification of the adept, however deftly this idea might be concealed in public statements. The main elements of the conceptual apparatus that had been developed by Greek-speaking mystics reappeared in the systems of their Arab or Persian successors. Inspired knowledge is again accessible to the individual and ascetic practices promote illumination; the organization of the conventicles and probably even the social background of the majority of the disciples present a reasonably exact replica of the Hellenistic mystery communities as they had been reformed through Christianity.

With orthodoxy committed to "classical" thought for method and concept heterodoxy can be described, in a general manner, as continuing the intellectual motives of the "postclassical" period. This is not to suggest that a postclassical movement such as Neo-

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Platonism did not affect the orthodox thought-pattern or the thought-pattern of such philosophers as considered themselves securely within the Sunna. But Shîʿite theology, in teaching the permanence of revelation through the person of the *imâm*, the carrier of the divine light-spark transmitted from Adam through Muḥammad to his cousin and son-in-law ʿAlî and his descendants, and in admitting (like the mystics) the allegorical interpretation of the Koran, explicitly perpetuated postclassical modes of thought. Some of the Shîʿite sects developed cosmologies of emanation whose structure and emotive purpose are hardly distinguishable from "postclassical" speculations. It is also in the doctrines of certain "exaggerating" Shîʿites (to borrow a favorite slogan of their opponents) that a mythology of the Gnostic type has found its only point of entry into Muslim theology.

The conflicting influences of the two traditions are reflected in the discussion of almost any major theological problem. Thus it is the *ṭabîʿî*, the continuator of Greek science and natural philosophy, who denies the possibility of miracles. The Neo-Platonists in Islam, in the footsteps of their Hellenistic teachers, once *allegoresis* fails to explain the miracle away, account for the suprarational by ascribing to the soul of the "pneumatic" a share in the control of the phenomenal world.[8] And the theory of allegorical interpretation as propounded by the mystic, at-Tustarî (d. A.D. 896),[9] repeats in their very detail the methodical views on the fourfold meaning of Scripture of St. Augustine (set forth between 391 and 393) and John Cassian (*ca.* 426), who, in turn, seem to elaborate on principles enunciated by Origen (d. *ca.* A.D. 254).[10]

The two traditions blend in the concept of the Mystic Saint. There is an unbroken line from the Stoic Sage, the "classical" *theios aner*, to the early Ṣûfic adept. The Divine Man of antiquity is a spiritual leader; he is, in the last analysis, self-taught, i.e., endowed with inspired knowledge; his function may perhaps be described as soteriological. But while an outstanding man and a man invested with especial grace and power, he remains confined to mankind as the locus of his significance. Postclassical antiquity places the Perfect Man by his side. The Perfect Man is he who has undergone the change in substance that the supreme gnosis will bring about. He is the pneumatic of Hellenistic and Gnostic writings. Although still walking on earth he is no longer man. Where the miracle of the *theios aner* is due to divine *charisma*, the *anthropos teleios* works it out of his own spiritual power. The Shîʿite

imām and later the Ṣūfic saint are such Perfect Men.[11] Their significance transcends humankind; it has become cosmological. The existence of a "pole," *quṭb*, of the hierarchy of saints is indispensable for the continuance of the universe; he is "the absolute mirror of Divinity."[12] It need hardly be said that in this development the "postclassical" tradition brought a complete defeat to the intellectual tendencies of primitive Islam, whose piety was based on the realization of the abyss separating the Creator from his creature. There can be little doubt that popular sentiment outside of Arabia, still responding in terms of older beliefs, forced this alienation from the fundamental concepts of the Prophet, who himself had gradually become the archetype of a Perfect Man.

The function of Hellenism in Islam—the distinction between the two traditions may be suspended at this stage of the investigation—was essentially threefold. Above all, Hellenism provided Muslim civilization with rationalized forms of thought. It taught Islam the art of systemization. It transmitted tested logical procedures and the ability to discuss generalities on the appropriate level of abstraction.[13] It even supplied, in some cases, prepared sets of concepts and, almost everywhere, satisfactory principles of classification.

Arabic philosophy is, of course, the most obvious illustration. But even in what is perhaps the most original and the most delicate gift of Islam, its early mysticism, the conceptual framework, the rationalization of the ineffable that alone made it transmissible, is overwhelmingly Hellenistic in inspiration if not in the very wording. The intimate experiences of the Muslim mystic's progress are systematized along the lines (and partly in the terms) of his Christian predecessor, although a certain subtilization is unmistakable in the precise distinction, by the Muslim, of *stages*, due to human effort, and *states*, owed to divine grace.[14] It is the Hellenic tradition that renders possible the transition from critical *aperçu* to literary theory, from apophthegms on human behavior to scientific ethics. It deserves notice that the Persian tradition, influential and stimulating especially between A.D. 750 and 850, is apt to add material rather than form to Muslim scientific thought.[15]

Beyond the conceptual means of systemization Hellenism had coined expressional patterns and techniques of presentation of which Muslim civilization availed itself. Not only are the *Lives* of the Ṣūfī saints more or less patterned on the Greek *Lives* of the philosophers, not only does the description of courtly love integrate

characteristic traits of the Hellenistic literary convention, but the
very conception of the poet's originality and the idea and ethics of
imitation strikingly reflect Greek sentiment. Philosophical concepts
are modified but the representational elements preserved. Gnostic
doctrine has the soul on its descent earthward invested with the
vice presided over by each planet through whose sphere it passes.
Jîlî (d. between A.D. 1406 and 1417) describes how the mystic in
his ascent experiences the successive self-revelations of God in
various of His names, and Sha'rânî (d. 1565) explains that as the
mystic passes these stages he is endowed with the qualities these
names predicate.[16] The Hellenistic figure of speech which in speak-
ing of God or the Logos identifies in a *coincidentia oppositorum* the
created and the Creator—the Logos is cupbearer and wine; God,
the provider and the provision[17]—survives as late as Ibn al-Fâriḍ
(d. 1235)[18] and Jalâl ad-Dîn Rûmî (d. 1273).[19]

In a sense, the most important function of Hellenism was the
transmission to Islam of an enormous and varied amount of sub-
ject matter. A huge body of facts, for the most part organized,
was brought to the attention of the Muslims, who eagerly absorbed
and at times enriched the heritage. The wealth of new material
may have been greatest in medicine and the natural sciences, which
had been cultivated, without any effective break in the Syriac-
(and to some extent, the Persian-) speaking world. But there is evi-
dence that Greek politics assisted the Muslims in getting beyond
the ethicopolitical studies of the Persians and in some respects
beyond the Greek achievement itself. Greek educational ideas
were considered, the cleavage between a secular and a religious
education at least realized, although nothing comparable to the
civic education of antiquity ever did take root and although in the
later Middle Ages the concept of education shrank decisively to
cover but training in the religious sciences and the appropriation
of a code of manners. The adoption of Hellenistic astrology, magic,
soothsaying, and dream-interpretation (in large measure a reinte-
gration of old Oriental lore) has not yet been sufficiently examined.

In the tenth century Hellenism as a motivating force and a meth-
odological tool in the hands of the heterodox and the philosophers
threatened to promote the disintegration of Islamic doctrine. In
terms of the teaching of the founder, the Shî'a had abandoned signif-
icant aspects of the faith; the mystics were undermining the valid-
ity of the law, and the philosophers the scientific acceptability of
fundamental dogma. Under this pressure orthodoxy made a tre-

mendous effort to regain the half-lost positions. By A.D. 1100 the theoretical groundwork for keeping the mystics within the fold had been laid, and the Crusades had contributed to halting sectarian expansion.[20] The formal offerings of Hellenism were by that time ineradicable, and so was much of its thought-material in every field, from theology to literary criticism. Nonetheless, much of the subsequent intellectual development in Islam can only be described as a process of more or less conscious elimination of Hellenism, and more particularly of the "classical" tradition, which in the sciences had never become completely acculturated and which was more obviously within the purview of orthodox scholarship. As in the Hellenistic period proper, the Greek influence had been one of enlightenment. And again, as with the rise of Christianity and Gnosticism, a religious reaction cut short its spread, but not before many of its gifts had been absorbed by its opponent.

NOTES

1. An early verbalization of this longing: Plato *Theaitetos* 176 A.B.; an unusually striking formulation: Seneca *Nat. quaest. praef.* I. 12 (quoted by E. Norden, *Agnostos Theos* [Leipzig and Berlin, 1913], p. 106, n. 1).[1]

2. And to deify man. This is the gist of Irenaeus' (*fl.* 180) theology. Cf. also Athanasius (d. 373_), who sees in the deification of man the end of the incarnation of the Logos.

3. This view is a dilution of the Hellenistic-Gnostic (and Pauline) idea that faith as a permanent condition changes the substance of the illuminated.

4. Cf. F. Taeschner, in *Orientalische Stimmen zum Erlösungsgedanken*, ed. F. Taeschner (Leipzig, 1936), pp. 60–61.

5. For the early influence of dualism on Islamic thought and the Muʿtazilite fight against it, cf. O. Pretzl, *Die Frühislamische Attributenlehre. Ihre weltanschaulichen Grundlagen und Wirkungen, Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie, phil.-hist. Abt.*, 1940, Heft 4), pp. 50–51. It is important to realize that the dualistic thought stratum, too, offered some "classical" ideas and concepts; cf., e.g., G. Furlani, *Archiv Orientální*, IX (1937), 351–52.

6. For the characterization of Zoroastrian thought, cf. also R. Reitzenstein and H. H. Schaeder, *Studien zum antiken Synkretismus aus Iran und Griechenland* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1926), p. 322, and Pretzl, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

7. The Muslim controversialist, following his Christian and Hellenistic predecessors, generally introduces the adversary's view by stating: *if one says* (*if it is said*) . . . *we shall say* . . . . Iranian controversy uses either the form of question and answer (*he has asked . . . the answer is this*) or quotes the adversary's statement and prefaces the refutation with *Against this:* . . . . The beginning of chaps. 2–4 of the *Shkand-Gumānīk Vichār*, ed. P. J. de Menasce (Fribourg en Suisse, 1945), illustrates the first, the quotation from the *Dēnkart, ibid.*, p. 234, the second pattern. (Ghazzālī's Persian pamphlet against the Ibāḥiyya uses an adapted version of the first Iranian pattern; cf. Pretzl's edition, *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie, phil.-hist. Abt.*, 1933, Heft 7, pp. 8, 10, 11 of the text).

[1] See note (xxiv) of appendix.

The progressive Hellenization of Zoroastrianism can be followed by comparing the level of the abstraction of the Zurvânist documents, published by R. C. Zaehner, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies*, IX (1937–39), 303 ff., 573 ff., 871 ff., with that of the *Shkand-Gumânîk Vichâr*.

It should perhaps be observed that not all "Hellenization" of Islamic doctrine is due to antidualist and anti-Christian polemics. A good case can be made for the view explaining, e.g., the Muslim atom concept as a dualistic heirloom that later was developed systematically under the impact of Greek thought; cf. Pretzl, *Attributenlehre*, pp. 7–8.

8. Cf. T. Andrae, *Die Person Muhammads in Lehre und Glauben seiner Gemeinde* (Stockholm, 1918), p. 104.

9. Cf. L. Massignon, *La Passion d'al-Hallâj* (Paris, 1922), p. 704.

10. Cf. E. von Dobschütz, *Harnack-Ehrung* (Leipzig, 1921), pp. 2 and 6.

11. Consequently the rationale of Sûfî miracles that fit but oddly into genuine Muslim spirituality can be found in the postclassical tradition. For an especially striking instance the feat of feasting for forty days without retiring to the privy which legend ascribes to the Persian shaikh Abû Sa'îd b. abî 'l-Hair (d. 1049), may be mentioned. This wondrous deed (told by R. A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* [Cambridge, 1921], p. 72) is merely a coarse dramatization of that Gnostic doctrine according to which food does not spoil in the body of deified man; cf. the characteristic quotation from Valentine (fl. 160) in Clemens Alexandrinus, *Stromateis* III. vi. 59, 3 Stählin, paraphrased by A. Hilgenfeld, *Die Ketzergeschichte des Urchristenthums* (Leipzig, 1884), pp. 297–98. Again, the antinomianism of certain Gnostic sects recurs in some groups of Muslim mystics on the basis of a closely related concept of pneumatic man.

12. Nicholson, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

13. Within the framework of the *hadîth* (real and alleged sayings of the Prophet) literature Islam developed a type of exposition intermediate between "mythological" and abstract-philosophical presentation. Where most Gnostic systems resort to involved *mythologoumena* to express the idea of the Logos (or a similar hypostasis) as the first-born of God (and ruler of this world), where the so-called *Theology of Aristotle*, a compilation from Plotinus *Enneads* IV–VI, available in Arabic ca. 840, simply states: "God causes the Universal Intellect [to originate], the Universal Intellect causes the Soul [to originate], the Soul, Nature, etc." (ed. F. Dieterici [Leipzig, 1882], p. 38²; cf. also pp. 136–38), the *hadîth* almost seems to tell a story. "God first created the Universal Intellect. Then He said to him: 'Step forward,' and he stepped forward. 'Step backward,' and he stepped backward. Then God said: 'By My power and majesty, I have not created any creature that would be of higher standing (*akram*) with Me than you. Through you I shall take and through you I shall give, through you I shall reward and through you I shall punish.'" Quoted from Ghazzâlî, *Ihyâ'*, (Bûlâq, 1289), I, 82, by I. Goldziher, *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, XXII (1909), 319. The saying goes back to the (lost) *Kitâb al-'aql* by Dâ'ûd b. Muhabbir al-Basrî (d. 821–22). *Hadîth* of similar structure, e.g., Buhârî, *Sahîh*, ed. L. Krehl (Leiden, 1864), II, 331, 334, 334 f.; al-Muttaqî al-Hindî, *Muntahab kanz al-'ummâl* (on margin of Ibn Hanbal, *Musnad* [Cairo, 1895]), II, 449. The kinship to Midrashic and Haggadic patterns of presentation is unmistakable.

14. First elaborated by Muhâsibî (d. 857).

15. The Persian tradition appears to be more effective in government and education. Also a distinct strain of skepticism seems to have carried over from Sassanian into Muslim civilization.

16. *Al-yawâqît wa'l-jawâhir fî bayân 'aqâ'id al-akâbir* (Cairo, 1305), II, 40, quoted by Andrae, *op. cit.*, p. 82. Ghazzâlî, *op. cit.*, IV, 343, quotes the following

saying of a "gnostic" (*'ârif*): " 'If you see me you see forty saints (*abdâl*).' Asked to explain he says: 'I have seen forty saints and have taken on one quality from each of them.' " Cf. Goldziher, *Islam*, VIII (1918), 211. The Forty Saints also in a poem by Ḥuraifîsh al-Makkî (d. 1398), translated by Massignon, *op. cit.*, p. 435. For Gnostic examples, cf. W. Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* (Göttingen, 1908), pp. 361–67.

17. Cf. H. Lewy, *Sobria ebrietas* (Giessen, 1929), p. 19, n. 2.

18. *Tâ'iyya*, vs. 173*b* (in Nicholson, *op. cit.*, p. 216).

19. *Mathnawî*, ed. R. A. Nicholson (London and Leiden), 1925–40, V, 717.

20. Cf. L. Massignon, *Essai sur les origines du lexique technique de la mystique musulmane* (Paris, 1922), p. 58.

FIRDAUSÎ'S CONCEPT OF HISTORY

IT IS ONLY when it is drawing to its close or even after it has passed away that a creative age will receive that literary representation that will be felt thenceforth to constitute the valid embodiment of its spirit, its aspirations, and its self-interpretation. *Iliad* and *Odyssey* follow rather than accompany the efflorescence of the civilization that has come to be known, for them, as Homeric. Virgil sings the mission of Rome at the very moment when, to him, this mission has been accomplished and when, to us, stagnation and decline are about to set in. Camões finishes the *Lusiad* only a few years before the Portuguese fight and lose their last battle to extend their possessions overseas. The glory of the Samanids was paling when Firdausî undertook his work; it had been a memory for almost a generation when he completed it. Yet it is the Samanid period in which the *Shâh-Nâmah* belongs, whose dreams it lent body and whose spirit it immortalized without ever devoting a single verse to honoring its deeds.

The Samanid century had created the language which Firdausî perfected and canonized; it had cultivated a sober and balanced taste in literary expression—jejune but graceful, fond of movement but careful of the bizarre, artful without artificiality. And it had fostered the spreading through all of north and east Persia of an interest in the national past. Or rather it had, through the encouragement of the court, made this interest that had always been there respectable in the Islamized circles of educated Iranian society, and had, by seeking to draw political strength from historical memories of pre-Arab achievement, Sassanian and older, actualized the latent national sentiment and, as it were, created the need for a national past to dignify the present through the demonstration of its direct descent from the Golden Age of Iran. And this national continuity was to be personified in the unbroken chain of legitimate rulers from the first man to the uncertain sovereigns of the day.

The period wanted for a compendium of the past, not necessarily complete in the pedantic sense of the word, but complete inasmuch

as the nation cared or needed to remember. Firdausî's success is primarily due to his tact in collecting and selecting. Clearly his sense of relevance was in tune with contemporary judgment. The very uncertainties of his attitude toward history must have helped to make his presentation universally acceptable—especially since he was at one with his generation in his valuations and took pride in what they prized. Firdausî was a man of considerable information, but he was not a learned poet. In the light of later epics his style is simple and his vocabulary limited, his imagery pellucid and his narrative direct. Just as Homer could never be matched, in the eyes of the Greeks, by the Homeridae be it only for the comparative insignificance of their themes that were developed to fill in gaps of the Homeric narrative proper, nor by the sometimes powerful and sometimes painful but always clever efforts of the Hellenistic epigoni, even so did Firdausî's standing remain untouched by an Asadî the Younger who dealt with a saga cycle neglected by the *Shâh-Nâmah*, or by a Niẓâmî, whose presentation of Alexander is perhaps more interesting than Firdausî's but who no longer cared for storytelling as such and who deliberately dimmed the understandability of his verse.

It has been pointed out[1] that only since the beginning of the nineteenth century has historiography claimed the right to treat of any historical theme which it feels able to inform. The earlier historian of the West—and we may add, of the East as well—found his theme solely in his own period or rather in that segment of the past that was still felt to be alive. It does not matter that this past may extend backward to the very creation of the world; the fact remains that it is studied and presented not for its own sake but as an integral part of the consciousness of the historian's contemporaries.

Thus the *Shâh-Nâmah* articulates the memories and associations of a past that was at the back of the period's consciousness of itself.[2] It is true that in all likelihood Firdausî amplified and modified what he knew to be the collective memories of his time; it is also true that he organized and rigidified those memories. Nonetheless it is unmistakable that he never ceases to speak but of what is near and emotionally effective because of its nearness. Countless years have passed since the treachery of time removed first one and then the next royal line from sight. Yet those ancient kings and heroes continue to live in the minds of their subjects' descendants as examples or simply as people whose problems and responses

are their own. And Firdausî's casual anachronisms tend to weld tighter the circle that holds together the living and the dead.

Firdausî supplemented the more or less official construction of history as it was transmitted by the Sassanian *Book of Rulers*, or *Xvaδâγ-Nâmaγ*, from other presentations going back to Sassanian times. Apart from the *Book of the Chiefs of Sakistân*, mentioned by Mas'ûdî (d. 956)[3] and used in its (lost) translation by Ibn al-Muqaffa' (d. 757) for Ṭabarî's (d. 923) report of Persian dynastic history,[4] Firdausî could rely on not a few Pahlavî monographs, as we would call them now, on personages and episodes of the Iranian past. He completed his material by delving deep into the "oceans" of saga and legend, into popular romances that had not found their way into authoritative compilations. For his purpose the nature of his sources was perhaps less important than their range. He achieved that integration of Sîstânî (Sakistânî) and Zâbulî traditions in the main current of Iranian tradition that the Sassanian historians and romancers had failed to accomplish—provided, of course, they ever intended a synthesis of this kind.[5] By allowing his narrative to roam over the vast expanse from Kâbul and Zâbul and Sijistân through the Persian heart lands to the Caspian Sea at Mâzandarân and again northward across the Oxus into the Turanian plains, Firdausî united in a fairly consistent whole the essential memories of that area which his contemporaries were prepared to think of as the lands of Iran. It is true that the lines along which the several traditions are riveted together remain for the most part easily discernible. But this may have been less so for the contemporaries. And in any event, Firdausî succeeded in laying down the frontiers of a Greater Iran (as compared with the political entities that had existed on its soil during the more than three centuries preceding his time) and in consolidating them on the foundation of a common past. The *Shâh-Nâmah* allowed every Iranian to share in the memories of every section of his country as in a personal possession. It helped the national consciousness to revert to a patriotism with which provincial loyalties could readily merge.

In the light of Firdausî's determination to create or revive a feeling for the oneness of Greater Iran through the realization of the oneness of its past, his omissions of available materials assume especial significance. It is almost immediately obvious that, of the three strands of tradition that were alive in Firdausî's century or that had been at work in the written evidence at his disposal, he

follows almost exclusively the national, not to say nationalistic, which had been given final form under the Sassanians. The popular traditions, from which Firdausî borrowed a great deal, also seem to have fitted in with the national view of history, at least in spirit. The third strand, the priestly tradition that had been elaborated as early as the Arsacid period, Firdausî left largely aside. Where it can be traced, as in the story of Darius, it appears somewhat incongruously side by side with the national, and it may be assumed that the juxtaposition is due not to Firdausî himself but to his sources.

Firdausî devotes considerable space to the mythical kings; as a matter of fact he begins his tale with the world's creation. But he makes no mention of Zoroastrian and pre-Zoroastrian lore on the origin of earth and man, being satisfied with a concise *aperçu* of the conventional Muslim view. The national tradition did, of course, operate with the philosophical concepts animating the priestly tradition. The Sassanians, especially in their later days, affected a strictly religious outlook. The two traditions differ in emphasis and in the valuation of individual events and rulers— they represent different phases of theological thought; and the national tradition bears the marks of that romantic love of the past that had grown stronger during the last two hundred years of Persian independence.[6]

Firdausî does not eliminate the basic dualism that pervades the narrative of his sources. Without entering into theological disquisitions regarding the fundamental conflict between dualistic Zoroastrianism and monistic Islam, or regarding the individual tenets of the old religion, he allows mythical events to retain their significance in terms of the dualistic conflict between good and evil, Ormizd and Ahriman.[7] In general, Firdausî is content to play down such features of the old faith as would directly offend the Muslim reader. He is anxious to avoid giving the impression that the Zoroastrians worshiped the fire, and he relegates to the background the "incestuous" marriage between brother and sister.

Zoroastrianism as represented in the *Bundahishn* assigns to the world a duration of twelve thousand years. The first three thousand, it existed unnoticed by the evil principle. After the initial conflict Ahriman agrees to a period of nine thousand years for the combat with Ormizd. The first third of this period, Ahriman has the upper hand; in the second the wills of Ahriman and Ormizd are intermingled; in the third Ahriman is reduced to impotence.[8] This

concept of cosmic history as the frame of human history which is made meaningful within the larger sphere by man's participation on the side of one or the other of the eternal antagonists remained active well into the period of Arab domination. The thirty-third chapter of the *Bundahishn* tells of the misfortunes that befell *Êrânshahr* in the several millennia. The first three (of the six millennia here accounted for) carry the history of man from the first attack of the Evil Spirit on the first man to the appearance of Zoroaster. The fourth millennium witnesses the rise of the pure religion, the reign of Alexander, the period of the provincial lords ($\kappa\alpha\delta\alpha\gamma$ $\xi\nu\alpha\delta\dot\alpha\gamma$, *mulûk aṭ-ṭawâ'if*), the rule of the Sassanians, and the Arab conquest. At some future date after a short year of Byzantine occupation of Iran, Mazdasnian Persia will rise once more. Then the fifth millennium will begin, and after it the sixth will bring the end of the world with the appearance of the *Sôshyans*, the Savior.[9]

Firdausî tacitly dropped this construction; or it may be more accurate to say that he secularized it. The fight of Good and Evil is real to him, but as a Muslim he identifies the Good Principle, or Ormizd, with Allâh, the One, the Creator, and reduces the stature of Ahriman to that of a *dêv* or of the koranic Iblîs. Firdausî at various points speaks of the youth or the rejuvenation of the world, but this renewal no longer is tied to the sequence of cosmological events; rather it is connected with a change of dynasties or merely with the advent of a new ruler. Any chronological link with cosmic process has disappeared. Firdausî's world grows young, not because as time wears on the victory of the Good Principle approaches, but because a model king has put an end to a bad reign—he will bring about a new era of social and administrative progress, and he will mature into a sage and become a spiritual guide for his people.[10]

Zoroastrianism had dominated the last great age of Iranian history. Pride in the ancestral religion was inseparable from pride in the Persian past. But as a Muslim, Firdausî had to dissociate himself from the national faith and to avoid the psychological and the practical conflict of divided religious loyalties as best he could. As his contemporaries did not accuse him of being a crypto-Magian, it is likely that the coexistence of two conflicting prides was too common in his day to be accounted scandalous.

The concept underlying the national tradition was, from a Muslim's point of view, more readily defensible. In it the glory of the past stood firm, no matter what the religious allegiance of the

ruler. The emotional conflict arose when the Arabs, the soldiers of the Prophet's successor, vanquished the legitimate sovereigns of Iran in the name of the new faith. As a Persian, Firdausî was irremediably humiliated by the Sassanian defeat; as a Muslim he should have felt elated at a development that had brought the true faith to his people and to himself. So the national tradition ended in a melancholy key. All through the Samanid century and its national revival the foreign faith was pushing back the indigenous religion. What to the contemporaries may have appeared as portents of a quickening of Mazdaean life soon proved of mere local or denominational significance. The sectarian movement of Ibn abî Zakariyyâ aṭ-Ṭammâmî[11] broke down shortly after its start in A.D. 931, and the great effort of the Zoroastrian orthodoxy to codify its heritage that led to the compilation of the *Dênkart* in tenth-century Baghdâd resulted in nothing but a precarious consolidation of the faith, unable to prevent the further decline of the "Magian" community.[12] And religious conditions had not become sufficiently stabilized to compel Firdausî to adjust himself to that double self-identification which an unqualified assent to the national past would have required. To this division within himself we owe such beautiful passages as Bârbad's elegy for Ḥusrav Parvêz[13] or the prophetic letter written by Rustam to his brother on the eve of his decisive defeat by the Arabs with its prediction of the downfall of Persia and all she stands for.[14] After he has told of the murder of the last king and the punishment of his assassin, Firdausî concludes his narrative perhaps somewhat too dryly:

> . . . Since then
> Hath been the epoch of ʿUmar, made known
> The Faith, and to a pulpit changed the throne.[15]

Four hundred years have passed; now, in Firdausî's time, the period of oppression is coming to its end. But was it really ending when a Turkish ruler actually controlled most of Iran?

The Muslim idea of history was at one with the Zoroastrian in viewing the life of mankind as a process of limited duration. The coming of Islam was the climax of the sequence of happenings, and the world was now to be confronted in the relatively near future with the Last Judgment. The total number of years allotted to man in history was not fixed by doctrine and, since it was established without reference to cosmic events known to take place at definite points of time, variations would not matter. But Islam did, of course, reject unquestioningly any suggestion of an *apokatastasis*

to introduce another, though identical, sequence of human history. The conception of religion and empire as "sisters," as it is developed by Firdausî in the Sassanian tradition,[16] had become an integral part of Muslim political theory, where we find it often expounded directly on the basis of Persian sources[17] and where it was destined to survive throughout the Middle Ages. Despite affinities of this kind, the Muslim concept of history with its devaluation of all pre-Islamic phases, its implied Arabism and open contempt for superseded truth was essentially incompatible with both the concepts that had been shaped by Persian tradition. Firdausî might have had hopes for a Muslim-Persian empire, but as long as this had not become a reality the painful conflict of the values inherent in the two traditions could not be reconciled. The bleak pragmatism of an older contemporary of his, whose name, Abû Bakr al-Qûmisî, bespeaks his Iranian descent and who proposed to rate any historical period solely for its material prosperity,[18] may possibly be ascribed to a feeling of hopeless inability to resolve the clash of traditions except by discarding them both.

The unresolved conflict of the concepts of history, in fact, their almost clumsy juxtaposition is characteristic of the realities of Firdausî's age. Persian national sentiment had to appropriate both the Zoroastrian past and the Muslim present as effective motivations. If it had been a political factor under the Samanids, which is not too certain, it had ceased to count when the Ghaznavids took over. The "brokenness" of the Persian intellectual's response to his historical situation was tolerable at a time when conditions excluded his nation from effective power.[19]

Firdausî's somewhat passive attitude toward the conflicting traditions was not necessarily typical of his Persian contemporaries. The Samanid vizier, Bal'amî, writing in 963, succeeds much better than does the poet in co-ordinating Muslim and Persian lore. His method consists in synchronizing the Persian king-list and the list of koranic or biblical prophets. He quotes contradictory traditions with respect to the total duration of this world without committing himself. In a passage added by Bal'amî to the Ṭabarî text which he is translating and condensing, the beginning of the world is given in astronomical terms and metaphysical time thus definitely transformed into historical time.[20] Thus the evolution of what was to become the Arab and the Persian wings of the Muslim Empire could be shown at any given stage. The Iḫwân aṣ-Ṣafâ[21] record a line

of thought according to which the world was to come to its end on November 19, 1047,[22] and which is based on a parallelism of cosmic change and changes of political power on earth.[23] Ismâʿîlî ideology of the period, too, insists on the double role, cosmic and historical, of the *imâm*, without, however, setting a definite term to the life of this world. History is, in part at least, articulated by prefiguration—the Ismâʿîl of the Old Testament prefigured the *imâm* of this name, the *imâm* Jaʿfar acts out what was prefigured by the patriarch Jacob.[24]

Firdausî is alone among the major contemporary students of history in that he seems to be utterly unable to extract any general ideas from the developments which he presents in such masterly fashion. The outlook characteristic of the period is that of the Hellenistic age, which looked upon history, the *magistra vitae* as Cicero was to say, largely as a collection of *exempla*. Miskawaih (d. 1030) at least pretends to deal with history for its didactic value. He entitles his work *The Experiences of the Nations* and assumes that the present generation may learn from the lessons of the past. Tauḥîdî (d. 1023) displays the same didactic motivation with regard to his own interest in history,[25] and the tradition of this attitude continues to the close of the Middle Ages, to Tâj ad-Dîn Subkî (d. 1370)[26] and Ibn Ḥaldûn (d. 1406). Firdausî does not seem to have professed this view. His comments on the events which he narrates are confined to melancholy observations on the inevitability of change, which must not be dignified out of proportion by ascribing them to a tragic feeling of life. For nothing is farther from Firdausî than that conflict between the concatenation of events and the individual's compulsion to realize the values governing his own existence, or that clash of law and conscience, of freedom and necessity, which are the essence of tragedy.[27] When Firdausî mentions change it is with the implied sentiment that change is for the worse; the transitoriness of greatness makes its value questionable; human ambition and human achievement kindle pride and may yield fame, but the treachery of time, the *raib az-zamân* of the Koran, stultifies human success, and fate ever tends to underline the essential futility of man's works—those very works that make up the glory which the poet sings.

Even as a collection of facts has a useful life longer than an interpretative synthesis of the same facts that will be significant in terms of the synthesizer's age, so has Firdausî's unintegrated

presentation of his nation's memories retained the stimulating usefulness of factual materials where a thoroughly integrated presentation would long have become solely an object of study and perhaps of edification and aesthetic enjoyment. The facts still carry, even where the formative power of the poet falters. The most cursory comparison of the *Shâh-Nâmah* with the kindred efforts of Virgil and particularly of Camões demonstrates immediately Firdausî's lack of a unified view of his nation's past except, of course, for such as is inherent in mere chronological or dynastic sequence.[28] This failing, which is both philosophical and artistic, did, however, manifestly further Firdausî's ultimate purpose, viz., the strengthening and consolidating of an Iranian national consciousness through the common possession by all of Iran of a body of history that would justify collective pride even when the present would not seem to justify it. And this pride would be the double pride of political leadership once held and cultural superiority still retained and ennobled by the adoption of the revealed faith of Islam. By leaving to his people the sum total of their relevant collective experience, he allows each subsequent generation to find its own meaning in the past. No final interpretation of the heritage is presumed; no one tradition is preferred to the exclusion of any other vital mode of self-perception. The glittering beauty in which Firdausî presented the heroes of the past has kept them alive in the minds of the Persians to this very day. Persia did not have the sense of a specific mission in Firdausî's time, so she did not demand a definite and exclusive interpretation of herself in her past. When she regained this sense of mission under the early Safavids, her Muslim present had grown out of a centuries-old Muslim past which, in turn, had come to be felt to blend with the more remote and not-yet-Muslim past. And today a revised Iranian nationalism avails itself in its historical self-interpretation (although with the more systematic claims of scientific aspirations) of the same past that Firdausî portrayed with such superb artistry and such philosophical casualness.

The historical object reveals itself only through the contexts in which we place it and capture it. Firdausî gives his object a peculiar richness of perspective by carelessly multiplying the contexts, that is, the traditions. Camões and Virgil are greater than Firdausî in their comprehensive and unifying *Sinngebung* of their nations' histories, which makes the present the consummation of the past; but Firdausî preserved better than they the multiple

interpretability of the historical process, which allows every age to keep alive the past by finding itself in it.

A Note on Kind and Form of the Shâh-Nâmah

The kinship of the *Shâh-Nâmah* with the *Aeneid* or the *Lusiad* is more limited in its form than in its intent. In fact, in terms of the Western contemporary of Firdausî, whose literary categories would be more or less patterned on a tradition transmitted or formulated by Isidore of Seville (d. 636), the *Shâh-Nâmah* might not have passed as poetry at all. For Isidore states: *Officium autem poetae in eo est ut ea, quae vere gesta sunt, in alias species obliquis figurationibus cum decore aliquo conversa transducat. Unde et Lucanus* [the author of the *Pharsalia*, A.D. 39–65] *ideo in numero poetarum non ponitur, quia videtur historias composuisse.*[29]

From the viewpoint of composition we might be inclined to classify the *Shâh-Nâmah* as a *chanson de geste* rather than as an epic, which term, to the Occidental student, inevitably suggests a work in the line of the "great" tradition from Homer to Milton. The interest in poeticized history, part chronicle and part romance, was almost equally strong in medieval Europe and in medieval Iran. Firdausî's approach to his subject reminds one to some extent of that displayed by the authors of the *chansons de geste* that belong to the Crusade cycle. This cycle has been described as consisting of (1) une section entièrement fabuleuse; (2) une section rigoureusement historique; and (3) une section semi-historique[30] —a classification which could *mutatis mutandis* be meaningfully applied to the matter of the *Shâh-Nâmah*.

The similarity of taste extends to the form as well. The medieval epic in the "vulgar" tongues of Europe shows the same preference as the Persian for narrative in rhyming pairs of comparatively short lines. It may be noted that the rise and rule of the rhyme are among the most striking common characteristics of medieval literature East and West, as contrasted with its "premedieval" models and antecedents.

In this connection the observation is called for that a *chanson de geste* is little else but a *kâr-Nâmak*, or book of deeds or *gesta*, in poetical form. *Praxis*, as the individual "deed" of the hero in the *spätantike* life-tale of a philosopher, saint, or martyr; and *kâr*, as the individual "deed" of the heroized prince on his road to kingship in the Pahlavî narrative of Artaχshêr-ê Pâβaγân, are,

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the first very likely an antecedent, but both, curious parallels to the etymological origin and function of the French term. E. R. Curtius[31] points out that the Spanish priest, Juvencus, in the preface of his *Evangeliorum libri IV*, defines his program by saying (vs. 19): "*mihi carmen erunt Christi vitalia gesta.*" Curtius continues: "In diesem Vers war ein Anhaltspunkt für die mittelalterliche Auffassung des Epos gegeben: die Taten (*gesta*) eines Helden zu versifizieren."

Although for the sake of classification the *Shâh-Nâmah* should be placed with the *chansons de geste* rather than with the Great Tradition, certain affinities of its presentation with the style and the clichés of that very Tradition must not be overlooked. Even as it has been possible to demonstrate, for example, the survival into Arabic times of the ancient rhetorical pattern for the city panegyric[32] as well as that of the *Ubi sunt qui ante nos* motif[33] —the same could be shown, e.g., for the *topos* of the "praise of poetry"[34] and for that of the *Lustort*[35]—so the survival of other stylistic habits of late antiquity could be documented in Firdausî. The *spätantike* stylistic clichés traced by Curtius in the *Chanson de Roland*[36] could as easily be traced in the *Shâh-Nâmah*.

Persian theory has not found the epic its proper place. Shams-i Qais (who completed his work in 1232/3) is representative when he confines himself to consideration of the prosodical appearance of the *mathnawî* (literally: couplet[-poem]), as epic narrative is called in Persian where the term is chosen solely for its metrical characteristics. These characteristics Shams-i Qais illustrates by an example from the *Shâh-Nâmah*, concluding his exposition with the remark: "This kind, *nauʿ*, is used for extensive tales and long stories which it would be impossible to compose on one and the same rhyme throughout."[37] His contemporary, Ḍiyâʾ ad-Dîn Ibn al-Athîr (d. 1234), is the only Arab theorist to refer to the Persian epic. He sees poetry as separated from prose composition, *kitâba*, by three peculiarities: meter, a different choice of words, and limitation in length. But with regard to this last point he feels constrained to make one qualification: "I found that the Persians, *al-ʿajam*, excel the Arabs in this point; for their poet [!] records a [kind of] book(s) composed in poetry from beginning to end. It is a detailed presentation, *sharḥ*, of stories and events, *aḥwâl*. Nonetheless it is exceedingly eloquent [the text has both *faṣâḥa* and *balâgha*] in the language of the people." Firdausî's *Shâh-Nâmah* is an unsurpassed specimen of this kind, which deals in 60,000 verses with the history

of the Persians. "It is the Koran of those people." Despite the general inferiority of Persian to Arabic letters, in this one respect the Arabs have nothing to match Persian achievement.[38]

The origin of the meter of the *Shāh-Nāmah*—a hendecasyllabic line with four *ictus*—has been followed back to the Arsacid period. Rhymed pairs of such lines occur in the Turfan Fragments and in the *Great Bundahishn*. The meter was taken over by the Arabs in pre-Islamic times and developed in accordance with their quantitative prosody. Persian prosodical theory of the Islamic period repatriated the meter under its Arabic name, *mutaqārib*—there is no evidence of a native name.

It is to be noted, however, that the Pahlavī specimens of the hendecasyllabic verse are not to be found in historical narrative but in a sample of *Rangstreitliteratur* and in religious poetry. As we do not know whether the *Xvaδāγ-Nāmaγ* was written in verse or in prose, we cannot decide who first selected the *mutaqārib* as the vehicle of an extensive "historical" narrative. Nöldeke has pointed out, with reference to a *mutaqārib* couplet by Abū Shukūr of Balḫ (*fl.* 941/42), that already some time before Daqīqī and Firdausī the *mutaqārib* had been employed for epic presentation and that, besides, the style of this epic had developed certain fixed forms that had had their roots in Pahlavī narrative.[39] If the use of the *mutaqārib* originated with a poet of the post-Pahlavī period, his choice is all the more remarkable since the octosyllabic variety of the other principal meter of the Persian epic, the *hazaj*, actually had been used in Pahlavī for historical narrative. In fact, the so-called *Great Bundahishn*[40] contains five lines (two of which rhyme) that deal with the exposure of a newborn prince, Kavāt, in a chest on a river and his discovery by one Urav who brought him up in his home—the very motif that was spun out to considerable length by Firdausī[41] when he recorded the youth of the future king Dārāb. The octosyllabic verse (with occasional rhyme) had also been used in the apocalyptic prophecies of the *Zhāmāsp-Nāmaγ*.[42] Equally remarkable is the disregard shown by Daqīqī of the hexasyllabics used with such great skill and effect by the poet of the *Ayāδγār-ê Zarērān*,[43] although (1) its contents were incorporated in the *Shāh-Nāmah;* (2) it anticipates such peculiarities of the *Shāh-Nāmah* as the hyperbolic imagery; and (3) not a few individual lines of Daqīqī's are nothing but recastings of specific passages of the *Zarēr Book*.[44] The joining of two octosyllabic (and hendecasyllabic) lines to a rhymed pair or, in the language of Arabo-Persian prosody,

the joining of two such lines into one verse with rhyming hemistichs, must have been widely practiced by the end of the Sassanian period, since the Arabs took over this form, later called *muzdawij*, as early as *ca.* A.D. 700.[45]

The occurrence in the *Shâh-Nâmah* of classical or postclassical stylistic devices and clichés is readily ascertained. It is, of course, much more difficult to reconstruct the road on which these clichés found their way into tenth-century Persia than to retrace that which connects their Hellenistic-Roman sources with the pertinent clichés of the *Chanson de Roland*. It may, however, be tentatively suggested that the *Alexander Romance*, which was translated into Pahlavî directly from the Greek toward the end of the Sassanian period,[46] played a significant part in the history of this transmission. Nöldeke has pointed out[47] that the main contents of the *Romance* may have already been incorporated in the *Xvaδáγ-Nâmaγ*. In any case, passages such as *Shâh-Nâmah*, VI, 1787–89 (Alexander goes to Darius as his own ambassador), VI, 1805–7 (Alexander's letter to his new subjects), and VII, 1810–12/C 1286–87 (Alexander's letter to Roxane's mother) are but "amplifications" of *Pseudo-Callisthenes* II, 14; II, 21; and II, 22, respectively.[48] *Shâh-Nâmah*, VI, 1801–3, the meeting of Alexander with the dying Darius, is closely modeled on *Pseudo-Callisthenes* II, 20, where the Greek narrative is almost completely in so-called "epic choliambs" of twelve syllables with four (or five) principal *ictus*,[49] a verse that rather provokes comparison with Firdausî's couplets of hendecasyllabic lines with four *ictus*. While it would be rash to base on a passage of this kind any conclusions as to the reasons for Daqîqî's selection of the *mutaqârib* for historical narrative, the similarity of the two meters (which may well have been reflected in the Pahlavî translation of the *Alexander Romance*) should at least be noted pending further investigations. Such investigations would also have to take into account the development of the (Greek and Latin) hendecasyllabic verse ("Elfsilbler") that was to be employed so widely in Byzantine literature, even as it should not be forgotten that the *Chanson de Roland*, for example, is composed in decasyllabic couplets of alliterative verse.

NOTES

1. By E. Schwartz, "Geschichtschreibung und Geschichte bei den Hellenen," *Die Antike*, XII (1928), 14; reprinted in *Gesammelte Schriften*, I (Berlin, 1938), 67.

2. Precedent goes back as far as the Zam Yasht (Yasht 19) of the Avesta where, §§21–87, a long list of mythical rulers and heroes is presented in whom the *Xvarənah*,

the divine *Machtglanz*, manifested itself; cf. H. S. Nyberg, *Die Religionen des alten Iran* (Leipzig, 1938), p. 72.

3. *Murūj ad-dahab*, ed. Barbier de Meynard and Pavet de Courteille (Paris, 1861–77), II, 118.

4. Cf. A. Christensen, *Les Kayanides, Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Hist.-fil. Meddelelser*, XIX/2 (1931), p. 143.

5. Two Sogdian fragments of episodes of the (Sijistân) Rustam story are extant. They were published with translation by E. Benveniste, *Textes sogdiens* (Paris, 1940), pp. 134–36 (No. 13 I, II). On p. 134, Benveniste connects the fragments with Rustam's battle against the *dēvs* of Mâzandarân; but the *Shâh-Nâmah* has a completely different version of the events. The origin of the Sogdian narrative remains obscure. So does the relation of its form to that of the *Shâh-Nâmah*. In 1913, W. Barthold suggested rather vaguely that the introduction of the Rustam cycle in the epic dates back to the times of the Arsacids or the Sassanians; cf. *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, XCVIII (1944), 134.[1]

6. The priestly tradition found itself embarrassed by the failure of the Achaemenids to embrace Zoroastrianism. On the question of their Zoroastrian affiliations, I agree with the negative verdict of E. Benveniste, *The Persian Religion According to the Chief Greek Texts* (Paris, 1929), pp. 34–49, and more particularly of Nyberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 355–74. Firdaust's detachment from the priestly tradition may be reflected in his designation of the two ministers, *dastūr*, of Darius who become his murderers, as *môbads*, or priests (VI, 1800, vss. 315–16/C [=ed. Turner Macan, Calcutta, 1829] 1280). Whether or not Firdaust's source here mirrors an actual antagonistic attitude of the Zoroastrian clergy to the Achaemenid dynasty we do not seem to have any means of investigating, although the assumption does not appear too probable. Mary Boyce, *Serta Cantabrigiensia* (Wiesbaden, 1954), pp. 45–52, makes a judicious attempt to follow the "secular" (oral) tradition from its inception in Achaemenid times to its codification under the Sassanians.

7. Cf., e.g., *Shâhnâmah* (Teheran, 1313–15/1934–36), I, 33, vss. 186–87 (trans. A. G. and E. W. Warner [London, 1905–25], I, 139), where Firdaust comments on the *dēv*'s action in causing snakes to grow out of Zohâk's shoulders:

> The purpose of the foul Dív shrewdly scan:
> Had he conceived perchance a secret plan
> To rid the world of all the race of man?

8. A. Christensen, *Les Types du premier homme et du premier roi dans l'histoire légendaire des Iraniens*, I (Stockholm, 1917), p. 15; cf. also Christensen, *Les Gestes des rois dans les traditions de l'Iran antique* (Paris, 1936), pp. 24–27.

The first three thousand years that really mark a period before the actual creation of the world constitute a Zoroastrian addition to an originally Zervanistic scheme; cf. Benveniste, *Persian Religion*, pp. 109–10. In Nyberg's interpretation (*op. cit.*, p. 21), the universe was first created as *mēnôk*, transcendent reality, in a state of perfection in which it remained for three thousand years until it was transferred by the creator into the state that is called *gêtik*, or earthly reality.

9. Cf. *Kayanides*, pp. 61–64.

10. For the model king, cf. *Gestes*, p. 75.

11. Cf. Bêrûnî, *Chronology*, ed. trans. E. Sachau, text (Leipzig, 1878), p. 213, translation (London, 1879), p. 196. For anti-Islamic prophecies in connection with this revolt, cf. A. Z. Validi Togan, *Ibn Faḍlân's Reisebericht* (Leipzig, 1939), pp. xxi, xxvi–xxvii.

12. For both events, cf. Nyberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 14, 35.

13. *Shâh-Nâmah*, IX, 2930–33/C 2041–42 (Warners' translation, IX, 29–32).

14. *Shâh-Nâmah*, IX, 2965–71/C 2062–65 (Warners' translation, IX, 74–78).

15. *Shâh-Nâmah*, IX, 3016, vs. 833/C 2095 (Warners' translation, IX, 121).

[1] See note (xxv) of appendix.

16. Cf. the passage just quoted in the text.

17. Cf. Ibn Qutaiba (d. 889), *ʿUyûn al-aḫbâr* (Cairo, 1343–49/1925–30), I, 13; trans. J. Horovitz, *Islamic Culture*, IV (1930), 197; *Murûj*, II, 162; Abû Manṣûr Thaʿâlibî, *Histoire des rois des Perses*, ed. trans. H. Zotenberg (Paris, 1900), p. 483. F. Rosenthal, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, LXX (1950), 181–82, shows conclusively that the author is identical with the well-known philologist (d. 1038); C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, I (Weimar, 1898–1902), 342, and *GAL*, Suppl. (Leiden, 1937–42), I, 581–82, should be corrected accordingly. The *Histoire* was written before 1021.

18. Tauḥîdî, *Muqâbasât* (Cairo, 1347/1929), pp. 143–44.

19. Cf. Nöldeke's judgment of the strength of Iranian national feeling under Maḥmûd in: W. Geiger and E. Kuhn, *Grundriss der iranischen Philologie* (Strassburg, 1896–1904), II, 154. ʿUtbî considers it a barbarism when Maḥmûd's vizier, Faḍl b. Aḥmad (deposed in 1010/11), makes Persian the language of the royal chancellery; his successor, Ḥasan Maimandî, restores Arabic as the official language (*loc. cit.*, n. 3).

20. *Chronique de Ṭabarî*, traduite sur la version persane de Balʿamî par H. Zotenberg (Paris, 1867–74), I, 2–3; for the integration of Persian in Muslim tradition, cf., e.g., I, 100 ff.

21. *Rasâʾil* (Bombay, 1305–6), IV, 194.

22. Cf. P. Casanova, *Journal asiatique*, 1915, 5–17, esp. pp. 6–7.

23. Tauḥîdî, *Risâla fî 'l-ʿulûm* (in: *Risâlatâni* [Constantinople, 1301/1884], p. 207), speaks of the expectation of an early end of the world that is cherished in Ṣûfî circles, but it cannot be made out whether the Ṣûfîs in question are Persians.

24. Cf. W. Ivanow, *Ismaili Tradition concerning the Rise of the Fatimids* (London, 1942), pp. 232, 244, 248, 250, 255, 259–60, 266, 296–97. The Ismâʿîlî concept of history, dubbed "historiosophie" by H. Corbin (*Eranos Jahrbuch*, XIX [1951], 251), is designed to account for the permanence of history in terms of a (practically) unending sequence of cycles that receive their rhythm from the alternation of periods of unveiling, *kashf*, and periods of concealment, or veiling, *satr*. Metaphysical time is connected with mundane history in the particular cycle in which we find ourselves, through the Adam of our cycle who is identical with the "historical" Adam of Bible and Koran. His fall necessitated the instituting of a new Era of Concealment (in which we are still living). This fall was induced by the eternal Satan, whose functional perpetuity ties together our cycle with the one preceding it. Also, the fall itself is meaningful only when seen as a *descensus* from the happy state of the end-time of the last cycle; it is essentially an error of judgment on Adam's part with regard to the structure of the time in which he finds himself placed. There is no evidence in the *Shâh-Nâmah* that Firdausî was moved by what from the Sunnite as well as the modern occidental viewpoint must be called the antihistorical outlook of the Ismâʿîliyya. For this outlook, cf. especially the studies of H. Corbin, *ibid.*, XIX (1951), 181–246; XX (1952), 149–217; and his "Étude préliminaire" to his and M. Moʿîn's edition of Nâṣir-i Khusraw's *Jâmiʿ al-ḥikmatain* (Teheran and Paris, 1953), *passim* and particularly pp. 123–26.

25. *Kitâb al-imtâʿ wa'l-muʾânasa* (Cairo, 1939–44), III, 150. Actually it is Ibn Saʿdân, vizier 983/4–985/6, who is expounding to Tauḥîdî the idea of the instructiveness of the past with relation to the future.

26. *Tabaqât ash-Shâfiʿiyya* (Cairo, 1323–24/1905–6), I, 184. In a characteristic passage Yâqût (d. 1229), *Muʿjam al-buldân*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld (Leipzig, 1866–73), I, 2, quotes Koran 22:45, "Have they not traveled about in the land so as to have hearts to understand with and ears to hear with? For it is not the eyes which are blind, but blind are the hearts which are in the breasts," and adds, "This [pericope] is an upbraiding of him who travels through the lands without taking an example

[from what he sees] and who looks upon the past generations without feeling restrained." (The somewhat similar *âya*, Koran 47:11, could also be taken as an indication of God's self-revelation in history.)

27. For a discussion of different views of the nature of the tragic, cf. A. Weber, *Das Tragische und die Geschichte* (Hamburg, 1942), esp. pp. 40–44. Max Scheler's (d. 1928) approach seems particularly fruitful. He sees in the tragic a *Daseinstatbestand*, owing to which *Kausalitätsverlauf* and *Wertverwirklichung* will find themselves in a conflict that cannot be resolved. E. R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Berne, 1948), p. 175, expresses this view: "Altes Heldenepos und tragische Daseinssicht gibt es nur bei den Griechen; in später Gestaltung bei den Persern, den Germanen, den Kelten und den in der Kreuzzugsära zum nationalen Sendungsbewusstsein erwachten Franzosen."[1]

28. See Excursus.

29. *Etymologiae* viii. 7, 10. E. R. Curtius, *op. cit.*, pp. 451–52 (= *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, LVIII [1938], 470), has pointed out that the first sentence recurs *verbatim* in Lactantius (d. after 313) *Divinae Institutiones* i. 11, 24. Servius (fl. *ca.* 400) *ad Aeneidem* i. 382, who voices the same opinion, adds the verdict on Lucan. Petronius, *Satyricon*, chap. 118, contains a passage which is generally believed to have been directed against Lucan: "It is not a question of recording real events in verse; historians can do that far better. The free spirit of genius must plunge headlong into allusions and divine interpositions, and rack itself for epigrams coloured by mythology, so that what results seems rather the prophecies of an inspired seer than the exactitude of a statement made on oath before witnesses" (trans. Michael Heseltine [London and New York, 1913]). It is easy to see which parts of the *Shâh-Nâmah* Petronius would have accepted as poetry and which he would have considered "versified" history somewhat after the manner in which Aristotle, *Poetics* IX, 2 (1451*b*), declined to accept a "versified Herodotus" as poetry.

30. A. Hatem, *Les Poèmes épiques des Croisades* (Paris, 1932), p. ix.

31. *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, LXIV (1944), 251.

32. Cf. G. E. von Grunebaum, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, LXIV (1944), 61–65.

33. Cf. C. H. Becker, *Islamstudien* (Leipzig, 1924–32), I, 501–19, for the Eastern, E. Gilson, *Les Idées et les lettres* (Paris, 1932), pp. 9–38, for the Western, development of the *topos* that goes back to the *diatribe* of the Cynics, and beyond it to Isa. 33:18 (cf. also Apoc. Bar. 3:16–19; I Cor. 1:19–20), as pointed out by Gilson, pp. 12–13 and 31. Further examples of transitions of Greek themes and genres into Arabic literature have been listed by this author, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, LXII (1942), 291–92.

34. For its history in medieval Europe, cf. Curtius, *Europ. Mittelalter*, pp. 533 ff.

35. As indicated by this writer, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, IV (1945), 145, n. 67; for the Western development, cf. again Curtius, *op. cit.*, pp. 200–3. The cliché has also entered Byzantine literature, where it occurs, e.g., in the epic of Digenes Akritas.

36. *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, LXIV (1944), 273–78. Curtius' observations, *ibid.*, LVIII (1938), 215–32, should also be considered in this connection. Cf., e.g., on p. 229 the short list of elements which were taken over by the *Chanson de Roland* from ancient epic tradition: "(1) Hervorhebung der Wohlgestalt des Helden; (2) abstrakt typisierende Landschaftschilderung; (3) Tötung von Ross und Reiter mit einem Streich; (4) Vorbereitung der Tragik durch Vordeutungen des Dichters, Omina und Träume."

37. *Al-Mu'jam fī ma'âyîr ash'âr al-'Ajam*, ed. Muḥammad Qazvînî (Leiden and London, 1909), p. 290.

[1] See note (xxvi) of appendix.

38. *Al-Mathal as-sâ'ir* (Cairo, 1312), p. 324. On the other hand, Ibn al-Athîr's contemporary, Yâqût (d. 1226), *op. cit.*, IV, 733–34, apologizes for telling the story of Bahrâm Gôr's master-shot, as it is a *qiṣṣa min ḫurâfât al-Furs*, "one of the silly stories of the Persians."

39. "Persische Studien" II, in *Sitzungsberichte der Wiener Akademie, phil.-hist. Cl.*, CXXVI (1892), Abh. 12, p. 13; cf. also *Grundriss*, II, 149.

40. Ed. B. T. Anklesaria (Bombay, 1918), pp. 231¹¹–32¹, as read and interpreted by H. W. Bailey, *Bulletin of the London School of Oriental and African Studies*, VII (1933–35), 760.

41. *Shâh-Nâmah*, VI, 1759–61/C 1249–50.

42. In the case of this book, it is likely that the author deliberately patterned his verse on the verse of the (lost) Avestan Vahman Yasht; cf. Benveniste, *Revue de l'histoire des religions*, CVI (1932), 366 ff.

43. Sassanian *Bearbeitung* of an Arsacid work; cf. Benveniste, *Journal asiatique*, CCXX (1932), 291.

44. These have been pointed out by Benveniste, *op. cit.*, pp. 262, n. 2, 271, 275–81, 282; for further literature on the *Zarêr Book* and its connections with the *Shâh-Nâmah*, cf. Nöldeke, *Nationalepos*, pp. 134–35, and p. 135, n. 5.

45. A good survey of Pahlavî poetry is found in A. Christensen, *Heltedigtning og Fortaellingslitteratur hos Iranerne i Oldtiden* (Copenhagen, 1935), pp. 32–37; for the *muzdawij*, cf. this author, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, III (1944), 9–13.[1]

46. Cf. Th. Nöldeke, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans," *Denkschriften der Wiener Akademie, phil.-hist. Cl.*, XXXVIII/5 (1890), pp. 14–16, 34.

47. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

48. Ed. W. Kroll (Berlin, 1926).

49. The lines were composed *ca.* A.D. 200; cf. Pauly-Wissowa, *Realenzyklopädie*, IX, 679. H. Kuhlmann, "De Pseudo-Callisthenis carminibus choliambicis" (Diss., Münster i. W., 1912), does not contribute to the solution of our problem. The "Metrical Discourse upon Alexander" which C. Hunnius, *Das syrische Alexanderlied* (Diss., Göttingen, 1904), dates between 628 and 637, uses the dodecasyllabic verse (three units of four syllables each) customary with the Syriac homilies.

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[1] See note (xxvii) of appendix.

ATTEMPTS AT SELF-INTERPRETATION IN CONTEMPORARY ISLAM

I

In 1942, H. A. R. Gibb stated regretfully: "I have not yet seen a single book written by an Arab of any branch in any Western language that has made it possible for the Western student to understand the roots of Arab culture. More than that, I have not seen any book written in Arabic for Arabs themselves which has clearly analyzed what Arabic culture means to the Arabs."[1] This statement could be extended to include the non-Arab Muslim and his failure to interpret his culture to both himself and the West. It holds good today as it did when it was written, and it is likely to hold good for some time to come.

Such failure on the part of the Muslim world, so eminently conscious of its individuality, to achieve, and largely even to attempt, an analysis of the fundamentals of its civilization calls for an explanation.[2]

The following facts, singly or in various combinations, offer themselves as contributory causes.

(1) The old-school Muslim considers Islam the final religion, the ultimate truth, the one road to salvation. He also is likely to be conscious of an Islamic way of life. But he will not think of Islamic civilization as one among several civilizations, whose differences in structure result in differences of possibilities and values. To him, the finality of the koranic revelation entails an approach to history that rates the several religions according to their proximity to, or remoteness from, the absolute truth as embodied in Islam. The Muslim scene needs scrutiny with respect to its harmony with the unalterable divine ordinance, but not with respect to its cultural elements and the forces responsible for its birth and growth.

(2) Modern Muslim society as a whole is lamentably ignorant of the origin, development, and achievements of its civilization. This ignorance is due partly to a defective educational system and partly to absorption by the adjustment problems of the moment. Moreover, scientific research methods have not yet found universal acceptance.

(3) The present situation of the Muslim East stimulates such discussion of religion or civilization as falls easily in any one or more of these categories:

- *a.* Apologetics of one sort or another;
- *b.* Reformist, or "reactionary" theology;
- *c.* Appeals for Westernization;
- *d.* Political discussion and propaganda.

Thus, religious, political, and cultural aims prevent, or at least interfere with, any study purposing the interpretation of Muslim civilization.

It cannot be overemphasized that whatever the modern Near Easterner has to say about his own background and about the West is primarily a political judgment. His presentation is meant to influence rather than describe. A vision of his world as it ought to be, not cognition of this world as it is, is mainspring and goal of his analytical endeavors. Pride and sensitivity not infrequently provide additional temptations to swerve toward semiconscious distortion of the facts.

The limitations at present inherent in Muslim criticism of civilization do not, however, deprive this criticism of its significance. Not only does it make it possible to understand the cultural and political orientation of contemporary Islam; it also teaches us how we look when seen through Eastern eyes. Since, moreover, the leading ideas of present-day Muslim self-interpretation will for better or for worse greatly affect both thoughts and deeds of the next generation, the West can hardly afford to disregard them.

The attitude of the Muslim intelligentsia toward its own background and toward the West has found expression in the work of a number of outstanding literary figures, some of whom played no mean part in the political developments of their day. The views of ten of these have been selected for more detailed presentation. While the personalities as well as the specific aims of these writers are widely divergent, their basic reactions are very nearly identical and, at any rate, their attention is focused on the same problems. Such unity in diversity seems typical of contemporary Islam.

II—*a*

The only classical Arabic author who might be quoted in this context is Ibn Ḥaldûn (d. 1406). For him the idea of Islam is coextensive with that of religion.[2] This is not to say that Ibn Haldûn

is unaware of the existence of other religions, but it is only Islam that he takes into account when he analyzes religious phenomena.

He recognizes a hierarchy not of beliefs but of types of contact between the human soul and the supernatural. The three ways by which the soul may establish communication with the spiritual world are dreams, divination, and prophethood. Divination is defined to include both the insight vouchsafed the ecstatic mystic and the knowledge of the hidden attained by magical procedure. The truths reached vary in relevance and completeness according to the rank of the process by which they are gained.[4]

b

Jamâl ad-Dîn al-Afghânî (1839–97), the philosopher of Pan-Islamism, spent his life in ceaseless efforts to accomplish a union of all Islamic states under a single ruler, the caliph. This union, which was to include Shî'ite Persia, would constitute a body politic powerful enough to resist Western domination. As a statesman in the Persian cabinet, as a teacher in Egypt and Turkey, and as a semivoluntary exile in Europe, Jamâl ad-Dîn fought to rally the Muslims for liberal reforms which he deemed an indispensable preliminary to a successful struggle against Western encroachment.

He conceived of Islam as a world religion, capable of adapting itself to the changing demands of every age. While his political agitation was more immediately effective than his call for educational and religious modernization, both aspects of his teaching are really one and derive from his belief in Islam as the greatest progressive force in history. Al-Afghânî's analysis of the essentials of Islam as stated in his *Refutation of the Materialists* (written *ca.* 1880) has become authoritative in those circles, mostly Egyptian, that feel that the modernization of the East is not only compatible with, but contingent upon, retention of the rightly interpreted ancestral faith.

It is significant for Jamâl ad-Dîn's ideas of the historical process that he interprets the struggle between the old and the new, the conservative East and the progressive West, as a struggle between the religious and the irreligious spirit or, to use his own terminology, between religion and materialism.[5]

It is his contention that the spread of materialism brought about the downfall of the great nations and empires of the past. The decline of the Greeks[6] as well as that of the Persians[7] is to be ascribed to the growth of godless materialism. Likewise it is the influence of

the materialist doctrine of the *bāṭiniyya* in the tenth century which
is responsible for the fatal weakening of the political structure of
Islam.[8] In more modern times the French and the Ottoman Turks
have fallen victims to the materialist disease.[9] Napoleon was un-
able to eradicate the poison of Voltaire and Rousseau—the defeat
of 1870–71 came as the ineluctable consequence of the infiltration
of materialism.[10] Jamâl ad-Dîn warns that the materialists cloak
their destructive gospel with patriotism (*al-maḥabba al-waṭaniyya*)
and allege that in their fight against religion they seek nothing but
the good of the nation (*umma*).[11] Actually, however, "religion is
the foundation of nations and through it they attain happiness
... " whereas "materialism is the root of the evil, ... the ruin of
the countries, and the perdition of the faithful."[12] All religion is
preferable to "naturalism," but of all religions Islam is most fitted
to ennoble men's souls and lead them to happiness.

To attain the happiness of nations these conditions will have to
be met:

(1) That the minds of the people should be purified of belief in superstitions
and foolish notions. Islam requires this, especially because the doctrine of the
Unity of God requires the clarifying of the mind and forbids such foolish and
extravagant notions as idolatry, or incarnation and suffering of the deity. (2)
That the people should feel themselves capable of attaining the highest levels
of nobility of character and should be desirous of doing so. The only thing
which cannot be reached by him who desires it is prophecy, which God confers
on whomsoever He will. If all the people were persuaded of the possibility of
attaining perfection of character they would vie with one another in endeavor
to attain it. Islam made possible perfection for all. It is not like Brahmanism
which divides men into castes, the limits of which cannot be overstepped. Nor
like Judaism, which despised men of other religions and instituted within
itself the priesthood as the caste nearest God, without the mediation of which
no one could attain nearness to God. (3) That the articles of belief of the religion
of the nation should be the first subject taught to the people, and this should be
done by teaching also the proper reasons and arguments in support of these
beliefs, that the religious beliefs of the people should not rest upon mere
acceptance of authoritative teaching (*taqlīd*). Guizot, in his work on "Civiliza-
tion," shows that the most potent element in the modern progress and civiliza-
tion of Europe was the appearance of a religious party that claimed the right
of investigating the sources of religious belief for themselves, and demanding
proof for these beliefs. Islam is almost alone among the religions of the world
in addressing itself to man's reason, and demanding that he should accept
religious belief only upon the grounds of convincing argument and not of mere
claim and supposition. Contrasted with Islam are other religions, such as those
which require the belief that one can be more than one and the many can be
one, a belief which its professors justify on the ground that it is above reason
and cannot be grasped by reason. (4) That in every nation there should be a

special class whose function would be the education of the rest of the people, and another class whose function would be the training of the people in morals. One class would combat natural ignorance and the need of instruction, the other would combat the natural passions and the need of discipline. These two provisions, the teacher to perform the work of instruction, and the disciplinarian to command that which is good and to prohibit that which should be avoided, are among the most important provisions of Islam. Islam is thus the only religion by which the happiness of nations can be attained. If it be objected, "Why then are the Muslims in the evil state in which we find them," the answer may be given in the words of the Koran: "Verily God will not change the state of a people until they change their own state."[13]

c

It was mostly through the medium of Muḥammad ʿAbduh's (1849–1905) personality and writings that Jamâl ad-Dîn's ideas became effective, and ʿAbduh both enriched and solidified the impetus given by his teacher. Muḥammad ʿAbduh, undoubtedly both the greatest and the most influential of Islamic reformists, lived to fill the position of Chief Mufti, the highest to which an Egyptian jurist could aspire, and he left an important group of ardent followers to continue his work. Nearly all the men who became prominent in the cultural life of Egypt during the first three decades of this century had experienced in one way or another the influence of ʿAbduh's teaching.

In his as yet unpublished autobiography Muḥammad ʿAbduh declares that beside the regeneration of the Arabic language his main goal had been to free the spirit from blind adherence to traditional beliefs and to understand religion as it had been understood by the first Muslims.[14] Thus his basic motive is the same that animated Muḥammad b. ʿAbdalwahhâb (1703–91), who endeavored to reconstitute Islam in its original form and whose doctrines still dominate the Arabian peninsula. ʿAbduh's attitude is characteristically expressed in his sympathy for Protestantism as a parallel movement to reduce Christianity to its original simplicity. The Protestants, ʿAbduh feels, arrived at a point only a little removed from the fundamental position of Islam. But for their rejection of Muḥammad's mission they agree in spirit with the early Muslims.[15] ʿAbduh sees the history of religion as an upward development, each successive religion being fitted to the stage reached by mankind at the time of its promulgation. In the period of man's childhood, religions were simple in their concepts, rigorous in their precepts. They engaged the help of miracles to overawe the naïve believer. Many centuries passed during which man developed his emotional

capacities until he became sufficiently mature for a new kind of religion which addressed itself primarily to the heart. Its commands were good but did not adequately take into account human nature in inculcating an asceticism that exceeded the capabilities of the average believer and thus forced him to detach his religious from his worldly life.

Finally man had grown to comprehend an even higher type of religious teaching. Christianity was superseded by Islam, the first religion to appeal to reason as well as to emotion. Islam recognized man's double nature and accepted his obligations to his body even as it stressed his duties to his soul. By moderating his demands on the believer, Muḥammad made it possible for him to fulfill them faithfully. As a rational teaching Islam has freed the human mind. In the domain of religion it has freed man of clerical authority, putting him in direct contact with the Lord and ennobling him by making him rely entirely on himself without providing intervention on his behalf by professional divines. In the domain of science Islam stimulated probing the secrets of the universe and developed those methods of rational investigation which Europe finally borrowed in the sixteenth century. In the social sphere, again, Islam freed mankind from fanaticism by permitting adherents of all religions to live amid the Muslims and by abolishing discrimination on racial grounds. Finally, in the moral sphere, Islam freed man of the shackles of asceticism which ʿAbduh considers a grave impediment to cultural progress. It would be inconceivable that man should forsake a religion based on reason for another religion less well-founded. Similarly, it would be his worst retrogression to renounce the liberty vouchsafed by Islam and to return to the tutelage of a less mature religious manifestation. These considerations establish Islam as the last and the highest phase of religious evolution, and it is in this sense that Muḥammad is called the Seal that closed the era of prophecy.[16]

The defects and shortcomings of present-day Islam, of which Muḥammad ʿAbduh was painfully conscious and which throughout his life he labored to remedy, do not detract from the essential perfection of the Muslim faith. Muḥammad ʿAbduh and his followers insist that Islam if correctly interpreted will, in the phrase of Muḥammad Rashîd Riḍà (1865–1935), "provide the only adequate solution for modern social, political, and religious problems."[17]

Nevertheless Muḥammad ʿAbduh is far from preaching intoler-

ance toward the earlier and therefore less adequate forms of religious life. He acknowledges the close kinship existing between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and he sees the spirit of God reflected in the sacred books of each of the three faiths. He forecasts a day when better knowledge will bring about better mutual appreciation of Christianity and Islam.[18]

d

Sayyid Ameer Ali (1849–1928), eminent jurist and the first Indian to be appointed to the Privy Council (1909), devoted his main efforts to the moral and social progress of his Muslim compatriots.[19] His concept of Islam, its historical achievements and its unused potentialities, he laid down in his learned and enthusiastic book, *The Spirit of Islam*.[20]

The Sayyid's penetrating and optimistic analysis of his faith is only occasionally distorted by its apologetic character. An uneasy feeling results when one is informed that Islam made its conquests in self-defense[21] and that the Jews of Medina, by their obstinacy and treachery, compelled the Prophet to eliminate them.[22] But on the whole Ameer Ali's insight into "rationale and ideals"[23] of Islam is remarkable, and his contagious idealism, if it does sometimes confuse hopes and facts, always compels sympathy, for the author as well as for his subject.

It was in a gloomy period of moral disintegration that the Lord roused Muḥammad to call mankind to Islam. Islam means salvation attained by self-surrender "to Him with Whom peace is made." But such surrender does not imply "absolute submission to God's will"; it rather means "striving after righteousness."[24]

The world stood in dire need of revelation, and these were the principles the Prophet was called upon to propound as the bases of the new religion: "(1) A belief in the unity, immateriality, power, mercy, and supreme love of the Creator; (2) charity and brotherhood among mankind; (3) subjugation of the passions; (4) the outpouring of a grateful heart to the Giver of all good; and (5) accountability for human actions in another existence." No trace of dogmatism disfigures this teaching. "Appeal is made to the inner consciousness of man, to his intuitive reason alone."[25] The temporary character of some of its lesser precepts should be recognized. The incompatibility with modern ideas of certain regulations which may have marked an advance at the time of their promulgation or which were, at the very least, well fitted to contemporary local

conditions does not militate against the catholicity of Islam. Its fundamentals are adaptable to the demands of all ages and all nations. They accord with the light of reason. Its rational character and "the absence of all mysterious doctrines to cast a shade of sentimental ignorance round the primal truths implanted in the human breast" are proof "that Islam represents the latest development of the religious faculties of our being."[26] To call Islam the latest development is tantamount to calling it the highest. "Of all the religions of the world that have ruled the conscience of mankind, the Islam of Mohammed alone combines both the conceptions which have in different ages furnished the mainspring of human conduct—the consciousness of human dignity, so valued in the ancient philosophies, and the sense of human sinfulness, so dear to the Christian apologist."[27]

The moral strength of Islam is supplemented by its intellectual vigor. Not having to rely on obscurantism to protect brittle doctrinal assumptions, Islam will encourage the searching mind. Wherever it ruled in the true spirit of its founder, a civilization of unequal richness has sprung up, for "Islam inaugurated the reign of intellectual liberty." It was only when extraneous elements attached themselves to the Prophet's message that Islam ceased to be "the zealous ally of intellectual freedom" and "lagged behind in the race of progress."[28]

The koranic revelation led the Arabs away from reckless fatalism. "With the recognition of a supreme Intelligence governing the universe, they received the conception of self-dependence and of moral responsibility founded on the liberty of human volition."[29] It is a misunderstanding of the Prophet's teaching to infer from his emphatic assertion of God's omnipotence a denial of man's freedom of action and of his moral accountability. The caliph ʿAlî (d. 661), when asked concerning the stern koranic statement:[30] "God directs him whom He chooses, and leads astray him whom He chooses," explained "that this does not mean that He compels man to evil or good, that He either gives direction or refuses it according to His caprice, for this would do away with all responsibility for human action; it means, on the contrary, that God points out the road to truth, and lets men choose as they will."[31] It is due to scholasticism and in particular to al-Ashʿarî (d. 935) that later Islam came to exaggerate God's arbitrary choice and man's helplessness.[32]

Ameer Ali stands practically alone among Muslim modernists in that he does not attack the West on political grounds and in that he does not intimate a temporal resurgence of Muslim power. Nor does he exhibit that offended pride and anxious sensitivity which so frequently inject a painful note in similar discussions. The Sayyid criticizes intolerance and reaction wherever they are met. He clearly implies that these evil forces are, or at least were, more powerful in Christianity than in Islam, but his mind is not set on disputatious victories; he yearns for a renascence of his faith along its original lines. Much dross has accumulated in the course of the ages; despotism has hamstrung the intellectual elasticity of the believers. But there is no doubt in Ameer Ali's heart that restoration of the Prophet's undiluted word will bring about the restoration of Islam to its rightful place in this world.

e

Sir Muḥammad Iqbal (1876–1938), the Indian poet and philosopher, who studied in Germany and England and wrote a thesis on the history of metaphysics in Persia for the University of Munich, went back from an almost Platonic idea of God as Eternal Beauty to the pantheistic mysticism of the Persian thinker, Jalâl ad-Dîn Rûmî (d. 1273), but finally evolved a philosophy of change founded on a dynamic interpretation of the Islamic revelation. Most of his books (in Urdu and Persian) are in the Persian tradition of the philosophical epic, but his final views are presented in his English work, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam,*[33] whose title probably represents an allusion to the great theologian al-Ghazzâlî's (d. 1111) *Revival of the Religious Sciences.* It is his belief that humanity today has a threefold need: for "a spiritual interpretation of the universe; spiritual emancipation of the individual; and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis."[34] While Europe has built idealistic systems on these lines its idealism has remained ineffective as it was supported by reason alone. Islam, on the other hand, "is in possession of these ultimate ideas on the basis of a revelation."[35]

Islam has the advantage over Europe in that it issued from the final phase of prophethood on earth. Muḥammad seems to Iqbal to stand between the ancient and the modern world.

In so far as the source of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the ancient

o

world; in so far as the spirit of his revelation is concerned he belongs to the modern world. . . . The birth of Islam . . . is the birth of inductive intellect. In Islam prophecy reaches its perfection in discovering the need of its own abolition. This involves the keen perception that . . . in order to achieve full self-consciousness man must finally be thrown back on his own resources. The abolition of priesthood and hereditary kingship in Islam, the constant appeal to reason and experience in the Koran, . . . are all different aspects of the same idea of finality.[36]

Thus man is enjoined to cope with the vicissitudes of change as an active participant in the evolutionary movement of history. Iqbal does not specifically refute the view, generally identified with Islam, of the universe as a static entity and of human society as ruled by unalterable laws, but he deduces a dynamic conception of life from "the essentially Islamic idea of continuous creation which means a growing universe."[37]

The principle of movement in the structure of Islam is found in the idea of *ijtihád*, the independent judgment of a theological or a legal question by the individual believer. There is no justification in the original revelation for the closing of the "door of exertion" decreed five or six centuries ago by the orthodox divines.

Iqbal greets with satisfaction Turkey's attempt to reground Muhammadan law on modern sociological concepts. As for the Turks' separation of Church and State, he feels that it is not incompatible with Islam "as a religio-political system"—a point which would not be so readily conceded by Egyptian conservatives —although it would be "a mistake to suppose that the idea of state is more dominant and rules all other ideas embodied in the system of Islam. In Islam the spiritual and the temporal are not two distinct domains. . . . In Islam it is the same reality which appears as Church looked at from one point of view and State from another. . . . Islam is a single unanalyzable reality which is one or the other as your point of view varies."[38] From the Islamic standpoint, the state "is an endeavor to transform the principles of equality, solidarity, and freedom into space-time forces, an aspiration to realize them in a definite human organization."[39] Islam "recognizes the worth of the individual and rejects blood-relationship as a basis of human unity."[40] Iqbal, therefore, agrees with Said Halim Pasha, the last Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire, who considers modern culture in so far as it is based on national egotism as "only another form of barbarism."[41] The value of a political organization depends on its spirit. Iqbal endorses the *ijtihád* exercised by the Turks with respect to the caliphate. Sunnite law imposes

the appointment of a caliph, but nothing in it precludes vesting of the caliphate in a body of persons instead of in a single person. Thus, the republican form of government is entirely consistent with the spirit of Islam.

Where others bewail the breakup of the classical caliphate, Iqbal perceives the birth of a new international ideal within Islam which comes closer to the true meaning of the Prophet's revelation than the imperialist idea of the supreme overlord of the past.

This is Iqbal's vision of the development ahead. "For the present every Moslem nation must sink into her own deeper self . . . until all are strong and powerful to form a living family of republics." A true and living unity "is truly manifested in a multiplicity of free independent units whose racial rivalries are adjusted and harmonized by the unifying bond of a common spiritual aspiration. It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islam is neither Nationalism nor Imperialism but a League of Nations which recognizes artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only, and not for restricting the social horizon of its members."[42] It is obvious that this conception would readily admit of amplification to include not the Muslim world, but humankind.

With all his insistence on evolution Iqbal is mindful of the element of conservatism in life. Man cannot help looking back, and he "faces his own inward expansion with a certain amount of fear." Iqbal cautions the rationalist reformer to realize that "no people can afford to reject their past entirely; for it is their past that has made their personal identity."[43] So, while he welcomes the liberal movement in Islam, Iqbal is aware that "liberalism has a tendency to act as a force of disintegration, and the race idea which appears to be working in modern Islam with greater force than ever may ultimately wipe off the broad human outlook which Muslim people have imbibed from their religion."[44]

Great care must be taken in reforming institutions, even in remodeling comparatively irrelevant religious rules relating to everyday life, not to advance unwittingly the disruptive forces of particularism that are basically hostile to Islam. "Islam is non-territorial in its character, and its aim is to furnish a model for the final combination of humanity by drawing its adherents from a variety of mutually repellent races, and then transforming this atomic aggregate into a people possessing a self-consciousness of their own."[45]

f

Muḥammad Ḥusain Haikal (1888—), a leading figure in present-day Arabic literature, is best known to the Western scholar as the author of *Zainab*, the first genuinely Egyptian novel conceived along Western lines.[46]

In Egypt he has been influential as the chief editor of *as-Siyâsa*, a journal of liberal constitutional leanings. He holds a degree in political economy from Paris and appears deeply conscious of the antinomy of Western and Islamic civilizations. The limitations of his insight into the basic features of Islamic civilization, a term with which he constantly operates, become visible when he analyzes it in his *Life of Muḥammad*.[47]

This monumental work reveals his general attitude as to what may be called progressive conservatism. He sees Christian ignorance of Islam and of the life of its Prophet at the bottom of Christian enmity toward Islam. If there is a conflict between the two religions, it is Christianity that took up the sword. As an aside Haikal observes that Christianity with its high moral purpose and its ascetic bent does not really fit the spirit of the European peoples.[48]

It is to be regretted that the opposition on the part of reactionary Muslims which apologists like Muḥammad ʿAbduh encountered induced many of the younger generation of Muslims to turn away from Eastern to Western philosophy and to cast religion overboard.[49]

There can be no doubt that at this junction the East needs the inspiration of Western thought, education, and science. But the West ought to relinquish Islamic studies to the Muslims because they are, by their very background and tradition, better prepared to understand "the spirit of Islam" and the "spirit of the East" in general.[50] Therefore, braving the opposition of both Christians and orthodox Muslims, Haikal proposes to set forth the life of Muḥammad on purely modern and Western lines.[51]

Unfortunately, Haikal has not lived up to his ideal. He does not make use of the best Western authorities, nor of all the Arabic material available; and when he seeks to back up an opinion by referring to some modern theory the Western reader cannot overcome a feeling of awkwardness, of a certain provincialism that parades fashions of yesterday with the pride of the pioneer. This is the impression left by Haikal's quite unnecessary introduction of

modern psychology when he interprets[52] Muḥammad's ascension to heaven as a superhuman spiritual experience.[53]

It is significant that the two scholars against whom he launches the most objections (many of them entirely justified) are Sir William Muir (1819–1905), whose *Life of Mahomet* appeared 1858–61, and Washington Irving (1783–1859).

Haikal rejects Western criticism of his book by alleging that the European, when criticizing religious sources, is motivated by the struggle for power between scholars and divines—a result of the division between Church and State, a division of which Islam is mercifully free.[54]

He also suggests that Western attacks on Muḥammad are intended to cover up the impossibility of attacking Muḥammad's message.[55] Haikal strips the *vita* of the Prophet of much of the legendary paraphernalia and presents such legends as he reproduces as reports or stories. Fundamentally, however, his *Life of Muḥammad* is orthodox, accepting the Koran as the Prophet's miracle, and so forth.[56]

To Haikal's mind Western and Islamic civilizations are diametrically opposed. The main fact about the West is the conflict of spiritual and temporal power—of Church, *dīn*, and State, *daula*. This conflict marks every aspect of Western thought, such as the clash of the inductive and the speculative spirits. The spirit of scientific induction is responsible for the West's resting its civilization on economic principles. Thus the West comes to be dominated by materialism, whereas faith is relegated to a secondary place. This maladjustment of values cannot but bar happiness.[57]

Islamic civilization, on the other hand, is founded on the preeminence of the spirit. Faith calls the Muslim to constant self-correction, summons him to purify his heart, and to educate himself to love and fraternity. The spiritual order constitutes the basis of the institutional order as well as the basis of the rules of ethics. And the principles of ethics, in turn, are the basis of the economic order. This hierarchy of values is the only order truly worthy of mankind and conducive to human happiness. From it results the absence of the Western conflict between Church and State. In Islam no one man has spiritual power over his fellow men. For Islam makes reason the judge over everything. At this point Haikal inveighs against blind acceptance of traditional beliefs and, by implication, affirms the progressive potentialities of Islam. Faith, the cornerstone of Islam, is to lead man's reason upward so as to make

him choose the good and reject the evil. Thus it is Islam, and
Islam alone, that addresses heart and head alike, another reason
why it is conducive to happiness.[58]

It is, unfortunately, undeniable that this bold, though arbitrary,
construction of Western and Islamic civilizations fails to offer any
explicit observations as to the inner workings of either the Western
or the Eastern mind. In no place does Haikal leave the sphere of
generalities. It is to be regretted that his belief in a resurrection
of the Eastern spirit did not induce him to undertake an analytical
study of its characteristic reactions, attitudes, and moods.

g

The fundamental importance attributed by Muslim thought to
the identity of Church and State in Islam caused the authorities
of al-Azhar to fight tooth and nail the doctrines proposed by ʿAlî
ʿAbdarrâziq (1888—), a member of their body, in his *Islam and the
Bases of Authority.*[59]

ʿAlî ʿAbdarrâziq endeavors to disprove the views that the
caliphate in the sense of a viceregency on behalf of the Prophet is a
necessary institution and that its double aspect as a civil and a re-
ligious authority reproduces the authority enjoyed by the Prophet.
These endeavors reflect the extensive discussion of the caliphate,
roused by Turkey's abolition of this institution in 1922, and con-
tinued heatedly to the end of the twenties.

They are, however, of relatively minor interest when compared
to the author's thesis[60] that Muḥammad's mission and hence his
authority were spiritual rather than political, that the spiritual
revelations and prescriptions bound the Arabs together in the
Islamic community, that political and administrative rules were
merely incidental and due to the peculiar position of the Prophet,
and that Islam was never intended to remain confined to the Arabs,
whereas, we must imply, some of the political arrangements were.

Leaving out of consideration the historical correctness of this
view, the startling inference is unavoidable that the *sharîʿa* (Divine
Law or Canon Law) which Muḥammad instituted regarded only
religious affairs, to the complete exclusion of civil affairs. Islam im-
poses a moral and religious code and this code is concerned solely
with the relation of man and God, this world being of too little
concern to the Most High for Him to devise for it any special set of
laws over and above the general rules along which He made the
human mind work. Thus the whole structure of the Canon Law,

which holds back the progress of the Muslim community, is shown to be no more than a human system of regulations which Islam has every right to discard and to replace by such a governmental and legal order as appears best suited to human needs and most apt to rescue the Muslims from their present humiliation and subjugation.

This bid for the freeing of the State from the trammels of the Church, or, in less occidental terms, from an antiquated legal tradition, was vehemently rejected by the Muslim divines. ʿAlî ʿAbdarrâziq was expelled from al-Azhar and deprived of his position as a judge in the *sharîʿa* courts. It may be noted as an aside that his failure implies the continued incapacity of Islam for true international or intercultural co-operation.

The disciplinary court of al-Azhar reaffirmed vigorously the traditional idea that Muḥammad was the founder of both a political and a religious system and that the *sharîʿa*, being founded on direct revelation from Allâh, was equally binding on civil and religious life. In this position, it may be added, the court would have found itself in agreement with Muḥammad ʿAbduh who, while demanding its reform, had always upheld the basic validity of Canon Law for civil as well as for purely religious matters and who also had been a staunch defender of the inseparability of civil and religious authority in Islam. There can be little doubt that the attitude taken by al-Azhar (and confirmed by a higher court) was in full accord with majority opinion. What Rashîd Riḍà had said in 1899 still expressed, and continues to express, the consensus on this point. "The assertion that the Government and the State should be separated from religion is one that necessitates the blotting of Islamic authority out of existence, and abrogating entirely the Islamic *sharîʿa*." Were Muslims to adopt the Christian position on the matter, "we should have laid aside half of our religion, [and that half] which forms a protecting fence around the other half."[61] The lesson of ʿAlî ʿAbdarrâziq's *cause célèbre* seems to be that, while the individual Muslim state or states will increasingly move away from the political and legal setting prescribed by Canon Law the principles believed to be laid down by the *sharîʿa* will remain unimpugned. The canonic ideals and injunctions may stay suspended for an indefinite length of time, but they will not be abrogated as there is no body that could abrogate a divine revelation. The contrast between the actual and the ideal, however irksome, has been for many centuries a familiar feature in Muslim life. It is

hardly to be expected that the cleavage will be felt as sufficiently painful and irreconcilable to make the faithful consent to a reconsideration of the fundamentals.

ʿAlî ʿAbdarrâziq's impassioned vision of the essential meaning of Islam loses nothing of its greatness by its rejection. "Islam is a religious call to God, a way toward the betterment of humankind and toward making man draw closer to the Lord Most High. It opens to man the road of eternal bliss which God has prepared for His upright servants. Islam is a religious unity by which God means to bind together all of mankind and which He intends to embrace the whole world."[62]

And this vision of his faith is based on a conviction which will appeal to all who believe in and labor for the progress of the human race. "To win the whole world over to fraternization in the faith is a reasonable undertaking and human nature is fit for its realization."[63]

h

Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlî (1876–1953), for many years president of the Arab Academy at Damascus, did not attempt, in his book on *Islam and Arabic Civilization*,[64] what we would consider a "self-interpretation" of Muslim civilization. Nonetheless, his study of the Arab world and its relation to the West holds the foremost place among treatments of this subject, and appears to this writer to be the most mature and the most comprehensive investigation so far undertaken by an Eastern scholar.

The outstanding place which his work occupies in contemporary Arabic literature compels a rather detailed discussion of its leading ideas. Its weaknesses are obvious, even when we make allowance for the shortcomings inherent in all apologetic writing. But it should not be forgotten that what will strike us as highly conservative thinking earned the author violent attacks in the Cairo press for his excessive liberalism.[65] The cleavage between the present Eastern and Western attitudes is convincingly illustrated by this difference in reaction.

Kurd ʿAlî's book is written to correct unfair opinions on Arab Islamic civilization as disseminated by Western authorities.[66] Such unfair treatment of things oriental by occidental authors is due primarily to religious prejudice which, according to Qâsim Amîn,[67] has barred mutual understanding for many centuries and which continues to obscure the results of detached investigation.[68]

A comprehensive and unbiased treatment of history is called for. Such treatment can be accomplished only through co-operation of East and West. It is time to suppress the impulses that kept people from such co-operation, since mankind badly needs mutual understanding to achieve a satisfactory order.[69]

At this point Kurd ʿAlī apparently felt called upon to invalidate various criticisms launched by Westerners against Islam and Arabic civilization. He divides the Western critics, not too happily, into those who are moved by honorable motives and those who are moved by prejudice and partisanship of some sort or other. It must be admitted that in his defense of Islam against a number of unfounded or all-too-sweeping criticisms, Kurd ʿAlī is very frequently in the right. The amount of ill-conceived, not to say outright silly, charges and countercharges that at one time or another have been exchanged between Christian and Muslim writers is as amazing as it is deplorable. The only stricture on Kurd ʿAlī's efforts which suggests itself is the observation that sometimes he is fighting windmills, inasmuch as he refutes writers who either never were accepted as authorities or have become obsolete long ago. It will be remembered that Haikal, too, did not always steer clear of such misdirection of labor. Nor does Kurd ʿAlī avoid that kind of vicious generality against which he inveighs so convincingly when he attacks Spain in retaliation for some allegedly unjust statements on Islam by a Spanish Orientalist.[70] Lammens and Cheikho incur Kurd ʿAlī's wrath as detractors from Islamic achievement who are inclined to attribute every accomplishment of Muslim civilization to Christianity. Borrowing a term of the ninth century he brands as *shuʿūbī*, anti-Arab nationalist, everyone who, in his view, denigrates the Arabs as a nation.[71] The conciliatory treatment accorded by the Muslims to the non-Muslim communities in their midst contradicts those *shuʿūbī* who stress Muslim fanaticism and intolerance.[72] Kurd ʿAlī contrasts the manner in which non-Muslim scholars were encouraged by the caliph al-Maʾmūn (813–33) and the impartial way in which Arabic "dictionaries of learned men" treat them with the mutual hostility displayed by Protestant and Catholic scholars even in our century.[73]

Kurd ʿAlī then attacks those Syrians—who, incidentally, are for the most part Christians—who advocate forgetting Islamic history to speed progress. The author observes that no man in his right mind ever called upon a nation to forget its history.[74] Another *shuʿūbī* is an Egyptian[75] who declares Islam to be a Bedouin

religion imbued with distaste for cultural amenities and whose
spirit the Wahhâbîs conserve most faithfully. It is due to the
Bedouin spirit that Greek civilization was eliminated from Islam.
As he does not need the gifts of civilization, the Bedouin discards
them, doing away with painting, sculpture, and music. This
Egyptian claims "that our attachment to the East is rather attach-
ment to the old. We cling to the East so as to have an excuse for
disliking the West and we cling to the old out of conceit and be-
cause we do not want it said that our civilization receded before
that of Europe."[76] The Egyptian further advocates the abandoning
of literary Arabic in favor of the vernacular and the treatment of
literary Arabic as Italian or Russian are treated, viz., as a foreign
tongue.

We should cut our Eastern and our religious ties—our true tie
would be with European civilization. We should unite with Europe
by any means including intermarriage.[77] It would be best for Egypt
to free itself from Asia and the East in general and from Arabic
history in particular, and to return to a "Pharaonic patriotism."

Kurd ʿAlî sets out to refute these views with great vigor. He
points out that the terms "Arab" and "Bedouin" do not coincide,
and he stresses the contribution of the city Arab throughout the
ages, from pre-Islamic times to this very day. The idea of cutting
loose from Arabic history and tradition appears to him as unspeak-
ably foolish. Even Japan, that paragon of Westernization, bor-
rowed only material goods and techniques, but kept her cultural
identity.[78] It would be calamitous to renounce the common literary
language and to have Arabic linguistic unity dissolve as did Arabic
political unity centuries ago. And Kurd ʿAlî notes that, had the
Egyptian reformist propounded his ideas in the vernacular, they
would have been buried in the very hour of their birth. The pro-
posal to cut loose from the Eastern and the Arabic background in
favor of complete Westernization and the restoration of the Phar-
aohs' glory is to be laughed out of court.[79] In support Kurd ʿAlî
quotes a paragraph from Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Ghamrâwî's
Taḥlîl naqd al-adab al-jâhilî ("Annihilation of [Ṭaha Ḥusain's]
Criticism of Pre-Islamic Literature")[80] to the effect that innova-
tions in both literature and science are possible only when past and
present merge.

In discussing Carra de Vaux's theory ascribing "area" origin to
the main features of Islamic civilization, which were merely taken
over and developed by the Arabs, Kurd ʿAlî fights the misconcep-

tion that "Muslim civilization was for the most part based on foreign elements."[81] Sidestepping a real analysis of the cultural elements, Kurd ʿAlī points out with some justice that the racial origin of leading Muslim personalities counts for little compared with their Arab education. The same holds for the analogous situation in certain Western countries such as France, where many people of non-French ancestry were to be found among the intellectual leaders. Kurd ʿAlī expresses the opinion that man is the product of his education and of his milieu. All this is not intended to imply that the Arabs originated their civilization completely. "They claim, and prove this claim, that they took over the civilizations of the ancient nations, added to them in large measure and handed them on faithfully to the bearers of the modern civilizations."[82] Here and throughout the book the indiscriminate use of "Arab" and "Muslim" is as significant as it is misleading.

Kurd ʿAlī strongly protests statements against "Islam." Islam is a different phenomenon in different places and at different times, and so is Christianity. Also, the decline of some Muslim states in recent days has many reasons, and Islam as such is not necessarily one of them.[83] Against those Westerners who maintain "that Islam is an obstacle to progress and that no nation may adhere to it without declining," it may be argued that it took Europe a thousand years after the victory of Christianity before it emerged from the darkness of the Middle Ages.[84]

The judges of the East ought not to overlook the fact that the Islamic world has definitely swung upward in the past century. There is today in the East a scientific movement of great promise—only adequate organization, *tanẓīm*, and unity, *waḥda*, are lacking. Ere long the Muslims will have caught up with the Europeans. Fifty years suffice for a backward nation to reach those that are more highly developed. This is a lesson of the Japanese example.[85] Kurd ʿAlī then indicates that the attacks of the *shuʿūbī* against Islam concentrate on these basic questions: the truthfulness of the Prophet in his call, the genuineness of the Koran, the doctrine of predestination, the regulations concerning polygamy, divorce, seclusion of women, prohibition, taking of interest, and the plastic arts (*taṣwīr*).[86]

To place the Prophet's truthfulness beyond doubt Kurd ʿAlī quotes European authorities in Muḥammad's praise. He completely eschews the question of Muḥammad's divine inspiration, thus avoiding the primary theological objection to Islam on the

part of both Christians and Jews and stresses instead the similarities in the ethical attitudes of Islam and Christianity.[87]

With respect to the Koran Kurd ʿAlī embraces the orthodox viewpoint without qualification. Accusing some of the Koran's detractors of being insufficiently versed in Arabic, he upholds it as the most eloquent Arabic book. He repeats the old argument that the Arabic stylists, although challenged to match it, proved unable to produce a work of equal worth. The Book is the Miracle, *muʿjiza*, of the Prophet: it contains everything, deals with everything, and so forth. Kurd ʿAlī quotes appreciations of the Koran by Rousseau, Carlyle, H. G. Wells, Le Bon, and others—a rather undignified procedure. Nowhere does Kurd ʿAlī discard dogmatic assertion for discussion.[88]

This chapter is depressing for the Western reader as it should be for the Eastern. When it comes to what Kurd ʿAlī considers essentials he becomes guilty of the blind partisanship, *taʿaṣṣub*, of which he is fond of accusing his adversaries. As long as Islam maintains the word-by-word inspiration of the Koran and allows its followers to twist their evidence in order to retain the tenet of the Book's absolute perfection, there is little hope for more than a superficial accord between East and West. While, as we have seen before, Kurd ʿAlī is ready on principle to concede cultural borrowings on the part of Islam, he inveighs violently against Goldziher's observations[89] on the influence of the Code of Justinian on Islamic law. It is obvious from Kurd ʿAlī's apodictic tone that he entirely missed Goldziher's point and simply jumped up in arms where he suspected an encroachment upon the essentials of Islam in which, unfortunately, he seems to include the Canon Law as it stands.[90]

The same attitude is betrayed by his discussion of predestination[91] where Kurd ʿAlī accepts the orthodox position without so much as entering upon a philosophical deliberation. He calls predestination a basic belief of Islam from which hailed the conquering strength of its early period and praises its effects in dithyrambic terms, even dubbing it one of the "benefactions" of Islam.[92]

On polygamy and divorce Kurd ʿAlī simply repeats what other Muslim apologists have said before him. Attention is called to the fact that the divorce rate in the West tends to go up whereas the divorce rate in Islam tends to go down. The Prophet is quoted as discouraging divorce. Polygamy not only did not weaken Muslim society but was necessary to make up for the losses sustained in its early wars.[93]

These standbys of Muslim apologetics would not be worth mentioning were it not to show the sterility of this conservative position. Looking upon Islam as an indivisible whole where fundamentals and incidentals are equally important and inviolable, it bars any progress that could be derived from the historical approach and the evolutionary concepts elsewhere so eagerly absorbed and applied. Despite his assertion that Islam is not the same entity at different times and places[94] Kurd ʿAlî does not feel authorized, as it were, to yield any position under Western attack. Here again a feeling of discouragement cannot be suppressed. Afraid perhaps that historical relativism, once admitted, could not be stopped, Kurd ʿAlî foregoes this most potent defense of the now obsolete, even where it would be most legitimate and most helpful to his cause.

The same applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to his dissertation on the seclusion of women[95] of which he denies any detrimental effect on the social, intellectual, and moral life of the Muslim community, and to that on slavery.[96] Kurd ʿAlî recognizes that some damage may have resulted in the past century by slowing woman's progress, and he points out that in many places seclusion is waning rapidly. On the whole, however, he shies away from "too much" liberty for the woman. As a matter of principle he asserts:[97] what fits the West sometimes will not fit the East, and it does not behoove one nation to challenge another nation to accept its distinctive habits and mores.

In the defense of the Islamic prohibitions on drinking and gambling[98] Kurd ʿAlî's task is, of course, rather easy. His presentation of the outlawing of interest and its effects on the social and economic life of the community is hardly satisfactory.[99] What he has to say about the situation of the plastic arts in Islam[100] is essentially correct, particularly since at this point the critics err when they impute to the Prophet a categorical injunction against painting and sculpture.[101]

In discussing European colonization, *istiʿmâr*,[102] Kurd ʿAlî admits that the Europeans brought order and domestic peace to the nations they conquered. This benefit is, however, offset by the economic exploitation to which they are subjected and, even more so, by the imposition of European civilization[103] which leaves the colonial peoples no choice but wholesale acceptance or rejection and revolt—both courses equally destructive.[104]

Foreign rule divides the colonial nations: it divides the Berber

from the Arab, despite their community of faith and language, the Muslim from the Christian, the black from the white. Kurd ʿAlî appears to resent most the French policy in North Africa, with its tendency to Frenchify the natives. The Dutch he considers the best of the European colonizers. They treat the Javanese on an equal social footing with the whites and allow the Muslims to keep their schools and other institutions. His only objection is concerned with the economic exploitation of the Javanese. There is no doubt that Kurd ʿAlî does not judge the French and the English systems on their merits and that he is strongly prejudiced against both nations. Yet it remains an interesting testimonial to the good will created by the United States among Orientals that of all colonial powers it is only America that meets with unqualified praise. Kurd ʿAlî says, "The colonial administration of the Americans such as that over the Philippine Islands considered the welfare of the natives. They helped the Muslims of these Islands—said to number two million—to rise to a higher level leading them from savagery toward civilization."[105]

He then mentions the schools erected under American domination.[106] The Americans, Kurd ʿAlî continues, are the only nation who do not use their missionaries as a vanguard of conquest.

Kurd ʿAlî concludes the volume with an attempt at listing the individual Western features accepted by the East.[107] These are what he considers the main borrowings:

(1) "The meaning of fatherland and patriotism." Here he attaches such institutional borrowings as parliaments, certain law courts, and the like.

(2) The press and journalism; here he adds the copious translations from Western fictional and scientific literature.

(3) Certain sciences (economics, medicine, etc.).

(4) An improved system of schooling.

Kurd ʿAlî gives unstinted praise to the West's achievements in production, both agricultural and industrial (he stresses the elimination of famine in the West), in medicine, crop protection, transportation, military science, the technique of administration, etc.; on the whole he is inclined to underline the influence of the West. He tries to make this influence more palatable by stating: "On the day of their rise the Westerners took from the Arabs all they could use and now they are giving us back some of what they learned from our forebears to which they have added in accordance with the progress of the times."[108] The gifts of the West are not, however, pure blessings. Its less desirable presents include a

general loosening of morals, an increase in drinking and the use of drugs, a rise of individualism with a corresponding weakening of paternal authority, restlessness, greed, and materialism.[109]

Kurd ʿAlī closes with a reminder of the commendable qualities of Eastern society, such as kindness, sociability, trust, and faithfulness.[110]

In the second volume Kurd ʿAlī supplements his presentation of the Arabic contribution to civilization by an extended discussion of "Sciences and Doctrines in Islam,"[111] "Administration in Islam,"[112] and "The Policy of Islam."[113] This last chapter may be described as an internal history of the Islamic territories. The proud picture of Islamic history and civilization which Kurd ʿAlī draws again documents the author's remarkable erudition but contributes little in the way of interpretation of cultural attitudes.

The general outlook of the author is made manifest when he deals with the Science of Jurisprudence.[114] He affirms without reservation the all-inclusiveness of the Canon Law, asserts the agreement of all Muslim authorities on its bases, *uṣûl*, and deplores the closing of the door of *ijtihâd*, but explains it with the deterioration of the jurisconsults after the fourth century A.H. (tenth century A.D.). He inveighs against the intransigent blindness of the *ʿulamâ* who refused to take note of changed conditions and thus forced, first the Turks and, later, the Egyptians to adopt a noncanonical code alongside of the *sharîʿa*. Without expressly saying so, Kurd ʿAlī indicates his belief in the possibility of revitalizing the *sharîʿa* to satisfy the needs of our age. He discloses his readiness to compromise traditional prescriptions when he attacks the Turkish legists who refused prospective converts to Islam permission to continue to eat pork and to partake of a moderate amount of wine in accordance with the customs of their country and whose refusal lost those potential believers for Islam.[115] In his Conclusion[116] Kurd ʿAlī points the moral of his dissertation by suggesting an answer to the question, "Which road will lead back to that lost glory of the Muslims while their hands are chained by the foreigner?"

The first need is for a moral revival. Honesty in word and action, clean thinking, concern with fundamentals, will have to be inculcated in the young together with reverence for their literary language as the mainspring of their national rise. The good of the community, not personal gain, will have to become the lodestar of their thoughts and deeds.

Youth must be taught the undisputed basic facts about Muslim

faith and Muslim civilization and warned of imitating the West except in matters of material usefulness. Aloofness from foreign influences and insistence on the Muslim nations' cultural identity are to be fostered. The education of women calls for more attention. The social freedom of the Bedouin women ought to be extended to the women in the towns. Laws forcing men into early marriages and easing the dowry requirements should be enacted. Agriculture and handicrafts are to be encouraged, comfort and waste discouraged. Of primary importance is educational improvement, the founding of schools, the adoption of adequate methods of instruction, the training of morally unobjectionable teachers who are conscious of both the religious and the cultural aspect of Islam. The taste of the young should be educated by the teaching of poetry and music. Each government should spend one fourth of its revenue on education and public health. Every community, tribal or settled, ought to be given a school, a mosque, a public bath, a playground, and a small library stocked with books selected to meet its peculiar needs without exceeding its comprehension.

Everywhere groups should be formed to combat vice and profligacy, to advance physical education, to popularize literary, social, and economic subject matter through pamphlets written in clear and understandable Arabic, and to instill patriotism and love of the Arabs and the *'arabiyya* in the hearts of the young. The young are to be acquainted with the great figures of Muslim life, both past and present, and they must be taught their rights within, and their duties toward, their community. The entire income from the taxes imposed by religion is to be spent on homes for the orphans and the aged and in combating destitution in general. In short, both the spirit and the body of the people must be cared for.

"A nation healthy in mind and in body, provided with the implements needed for the struggle of life is sure to survive, and it will be able to live free if it endures in patience and grows wealthy by its labor."[117]

i

The Anglo-Egyptian treaty of alliance, 1936, guaranteeing Egypt's independence, and the convention of Montreux, 1937, that extended her domestic sovereignty by the abolition of the capitulations, gave Egypt exclusive responsibility for developing her cultural potentialities. Under the impact of these events

Ṭaha Ḥusain (1889—), long her most philosophical and most aggressive educational reformer and probably the leading scholar-littérateur of the Arab world, submitted for public consideration a program of national instruction under the title, *The Future of Culture in Egypt*, in which he accorded equal attention to purpose, content, and implementation of a specifically Egyptian education. The concept of this education he developed from his concept of Egypt's place within the civilizations of the world. It is the exposition of this idea in the first twelve chapters[118] of the book which contains Ṭaha Ḥusain's assessment of his country's culture.

Independence, *istiqlâl*, and freedom, *ḥurriyya*, do not rate as ultimate goals. They are but means toward evolving *ḥaḍâra*, civilization, which rises on the foundations of *thaqâfa*, culture, and *ʿilm*, scientific knowledge. To these three, *ʿilm*, *thaqâfa*, and *ḥaḍâra*, Egypt must devote her efforts, so her present would come to match the glory of her past, and so she would destroy the justification of the European's feeling of superiority.[119]

Only God can create *ex nihilo*. So we Egyptians, Ṭaha Ḥusain proceeds, have to think of the future of civilization in Egypt on the basis of the past and the present. And in this train of thought the key problem emerges immediately: Is Egypt of the East or of the West? It goes without saying that the inquiry does not concern the country's geographical position but only its cultural affiliation.

From olden times there have been two civilizations on this globe whose every encounter was a hostile clash—that of Europe and that of the East. Accordingly, the question will have to take this form: Is the Egyptian mind, *ʿaql*, Eastern or Western in terms of its concept-formation (or, imagination), *taṣawwur*, perception, *idrâk*, understanding, *fahm*, and judgment, *ḥukm ʿalà 'l-ashyâ*? There is but one test: Is it easier for the Egyptian mind to understand a Chinese or a Japanese, or a Frenchman or an Englishman?

History will have to be our guide. There is no evidence of intellectual, political, or economic ties between Egypt and the East (i.e., the Far East) in antiquity. Close ties existed solely with the Near East—Palestine, Syria, ʿIrâq. On the other hand, there is no need to insist on the well-known connections between Egypt and the Aegean, and Egypt and the Greeks, from the very beginnings of their civilization down to Alexander. In fact, Egypt resisted the Persian invader from the East with the help of Greek volunteers and the Greek cities, until she was freed by Alexander.

P

The purport of these observations is this: the Egyptian mind had no significant ties with that of the Far East and met that of Persia with hostility. Its real ties were all with the Near East and the Greeks. If the Egyptian mind was affected by any outside influence, this influence was Mediterranean.[120]

The Greeks highly respected Egypt. She influenced not only their arts and sciences, but also their daily life and political conduct, *siydsa*. The Greeks acknowledged the influence on their civilization of other Near Eastern nations. The Mediterranean civilizations interacted, with Egypt holding the precedence of age, but never did her *ʿaql* enter into contact with India, China, or Japan.

All this is well known, but, strangely enough, the Egyptians will consider themselves Easterners, closer in mind to the Indian, the Chinese, the Japanese, than to the Greek, the Italian, the Frenchman. It will always be impossible for Ṭaha Ḥusain to understand, let alone to condone this misconception.

Spiritual unity and political unity do not necessarily go together. Islam broke up politically many hundreds of years ago. Egypt resisted spiritually her Byzantine overlords and later the Arab conquerors until with Ibn Ṭūlūn (868–84)[121] she came into her own within Islam.

The Muslims always realized that political organization and faith are matters of a different order, and they conceived of government as dedicated primarily, if not exclusively, to the practical management of public affairs. Europe is organized along the same lines. These facts are common knowledge both in Egypt and in Europe; yet for reasons which may be left uninvestigated the Egyptians are classed and class themselves with the Easterners. It is imperative that this grouping of Egypt with India and China be abandoned.[122]

After an excursus on Alexandria as a Hellenic center and an asylum for Greek civilization through the Roman period,[123] Ṭaha Ḥusain asks whether the ready acceptance of Islam made Egypt an Eastern nation. No more, he replies, than did the acceptance of Eastborn Christianity Easternize the European mind.[124] Actually, the eastward spread of Islam meant an eastward expansion of Greek mentality into regions where it hardly ever reached before.

Islam and Christianity show important similarities. Both influenced, and were influenced by, Greek philosophy. Essence and point of departure of both religions are the same. Whence then the alleged difference in their effect on the mentality of their adher-

ents? In fact, in Europe the barbarians relegated Greek thought to a few monasteries, while the Islamic world translated and absorbed Greek philosophy to transmit it later to the West where, beginning with the twelfth century, it produced a great intellectual revival. Pirenne[125] has pointed out that barbarism came upon Europe only when Islam arose and caused the severance of its trans-Mediterranean ties. Barbarism ceased when these ties were re-established. How then, Ṭaha Ḥusain asks, could the Greek spirit fail to affect the peoples of the eastern shore? The answer is that there simply does not exist any intellectual or cultural cleavage between the two groups of peoples that face each other across the Mediterranean. Only political and economic circumstances set them against one another. When the khedive Ismâ'îl (1863–79) pronounced Egypt a part of Europe, this was not a boast but a statement of permanent fact. The differences between Egypt and Europe concern merely secondary matters (*furû'* and *alwân*).[126]

While Europe rose, the Near East went down under the Turks, who all but wiped out its civilization and brought about a temporary separation from the West. But the barbarization of Europe did not cut off its mentality from that of the Greeks; and neither did the Turkization of the Near East break its spiritual connection with Hellenism. Moreover, one country managed to resist the Turks and to preserve its cultural heritage—Egypt. Thus twice did Egypt protect the human intellect: first, when she sheltered Greek philosophy and civilization for ten centuries, and again when she sheltered Islamic civilization, down to this day and age.

Paul Valéry (1871–1945) distinguished three elements in the European mind: Greek civilization, with its contribution of science, art, and literature; Roman civilization, with its heritage of political conduct and institutions; and Christianity. Now the first two elements are constituents of the Islamic mentality as well; and Islam undoubtedly perfected and completed Christianity (and Judaism). So once more the absence of any essential difference between the European and the Egyptian *'aql* is evidenced.[127]

In the modern age Egypt has taken Europe for her model in all aspects of the material life. Her spiritual *'aql*, too, is purely European, appearances notwithstanding. This applies forcibly to the organization of her government—even the absolutism of her recent past was more of the type of Louis XIV than of 'Abdalḥamîd[128]— her administration, finance, and economy. Certain old institutions that are connected with religion survive, but even those, while

still preserving historical continuity, have been modernized to such an extent that an ancient Muslim judge come back from his grave would find most of the court procedures unfamiliar to him. By and large, however, the ancients would approve of the modern setup in law, whereas we disapprove of obsolete entities like the Ministry of *Auqâf* (mort-main foundations) as retarding influences. We also have kept al-Azhar.[129] But since Ismâ'il it has been in a bad way and will continue so for some time to come. But even in al-Azhar much change has been effected.[130] All the signs point to Egypt's developing toward complete coalescence with Europe. Such a development would be impossible, however, if her character and her mentality were really in opposition to the European.

Constitutional and representative government has been adopted from Europe, but has at once become so deeply rooted in Egypt that no one would wish to return to the earlier stage of our political life. Are independence and the abolition of the capitulations anything but the recognition by the civilized world of our progress on the European way with regard to government, administration, legislation? We could not go back even if we would. Our mentality, our international obligations, everything, commit us to the new life. Our education makes Europeans of our boys. And even if the Egyptians had not always been spiritually akin to Europe, this new generation would be.

In the Middle Ages the Europeans took from us; now we are taking from them. The only difference lies in this: they awoke in the fifteenth century; we, owing to Turkish rule, in the nineteenth. But for Turkish rule, our ties with Europe would have persisted and modern civilization would look much different. But in compensation, God has made it possible for us to do in a short time what the Europeans took decades and centuries to do—woe to us if we fail to seize our opportunity![131]

The Westernization of Japan with its truly non-European mentality is the measure of the criticism we deserve! Now that freedom and independence have been won, it is our most urgent patriotic duty to convince the Egyptians, individually and collectively, that like the Europeans they were born for strength and leadership, not for weakness and subjection. One glance at the state of Japan one century ago will show that God created every branch of mankind with a disposition to progress. Contrary to Aristotle's view that some peoples are created to rule and others to obey, all peoples were made to enjoy the same rights and duties. When you look at

the differences of wealth, education, happiness within Egypt, do you believe that God created some Egyptians expressly to be unhappy, illiterate, poor? No, God created every one of us for a full share of happiness, if only we can find access to it. In organizing our democratic institutions, which we are borrowing from Europe, we are trying to establish that very equality which is the birthright of all members of one state. The same will apply in the international sphere—Egypt must never think that she was created to be ruled nor to rule others.[132]

To reach these goals there is only one way: to share European civilization in its good and in its bad aspects, in what we like and in what we do not like. Anybody who advocates any other method is either a deceiver or himself deceived. It is a strange fact that while in our daily lives we incessantly imitate Europe, we deny this imitation in our words. If we do not want to Europeanize, why don't we turn away from European civilization? But if we do, why don't we harmonize our words and our acts?

We want a strong national defense—so we need a European-trained army and European-trained officers to be able to withstand a European force. Who wants the goal must want the means. We also want economic independence. What but the adoption of European and American techniques can secure this aim? Again, we want scientific, artistic, and literary independence, and the psychological independence that comes with it—there is nothing for us to do but to study the European way, so that we shall feel and judge and work and arrange our lives as the Europeans do. Above all, we want freedom inside Egypt and freedom from foreign interference. But we cannot have either freedom unless we build up education on a firm basis.[133]

Some fear for the religious life should we, in assimilating the civilization of Europe, take over her sinfulness as well. But, Ṭaha Ḥusain emphasizes, the life of Europe is not altogether bad; if it were there would be no progress. Nor is our life altogether good; if it were there would be no decline. Besides, when we call for Europeanization we naturally call only for adoption of the good and useful. Nor do our conservatives advocate the retention of what is wrong in our lives. Ṭaha Ḥusain does not call for the adoption of Christianity, but for that of the causes, *asbáb*, of European civilization. It must be remembered that the Europeans differ in their religious allegiance, without this difference affecting their civilization. Moreover, the trend in modern European civilization

is anti-Christian. Also, the more intelligent Europeans realize that the conflict is not between Christianity and civilization, but between those that control religion and those that control civilization. The cause of the conflict is the powerful organization of the Christian religionists, *rijâl ad-dîn al-masîhî*, who are reluctant to yield any of their powers. Islam, however, not having an organized clergy, is not faced with this problem at all.[134]

The apprehensive might also reflect on the fact that the Muslims did, in an earlier period, borrow from Persian and Greek civilization some uncommendable elements, although on the whole those borrowings helped to build the civilization of Islam that is partly Arab, partly Persian, and partly Byzantine. The Muslims then fought the heretics, *zindîq*, but did not reject the foreign civilization that instigated them. But together with heretical leanings, higher forms of devotion entered Islam. And in the long run the contribution of the theologians and the philosophers, and the contribution of the libertine poets, Bashshâr b. Burd (d. 783) and Abû Nuwâs (d. *ca.* 810), have become useful parts of our heritage. Not even the most pious among us would wish for a law to burn the poetry of those men.

The same situation obtains with respect to European civilization. It presents the same rich mixture of good and bad. No harm will come to our religious life from taking hold of the motivating forces, *asbâb*, of European civilization. We have only the choice of repudiating the attitude of our ancestors when they developed Islamic civilization, or of following their precedent in assimilating European civilization. In actual fact, the case has been prejudged for a century, and every day do we take more from Europe. To turn back would be to perish. Many conservatives are really steeped in European civilization. They disapprove of having boys and girls grow up together, but send their daughters to foreign schools. What Ṭaha Ḥusain calls for is merely the psychological adjustment to fact. To do what one does openly rather than by stealth, to attune words to deeds—only this can bring peace of mind.[135]

Another objection to Westernization is raised frequently: it will endanger the national identity (*shaḥṣiyya;* literally, personality) of Egypt and her glorious heritage. Naturally, Ṭaha Ḥusain asserts, he does not advocate self-repudiation. But submersion in Europe was a danger only as long as Egypt was weak and not conscious of her past and her individuality. Now that we know our history and have realized our essential oneness with Europe, this danger is

no more. Powerful nations have ruled Egypt without touching her personality. Indeed, the only way for Egypt to preserve her personality is to stand up to Europe in European armor. Among the factors that have shaped the personality of Egypt is the unchangeable geographical situation. What else do we want but the re-establishment of that harmony between our needs and our environment that we enjoyed in the past? Other elements, such as the Arabic language and its artistic heritage, we want to make greater and stronger by means of European forms.[136] Nor do I wish to erase the memory of Egyptian history, but rather to make its future equal the glory of its past. In short, Egypt's personality is as little threatened by the new civilization as that of Japan; less so, in fact, since the Japanese past does not measure up in splendor to the Egyptian.[137]

The last objection is two-pronged—(*a*) its materialism is damaging the West itself and thence the whole world; (*b*) the West itself is tired of its civilization, as witness a number of thinkers who are looking to the East for spiritual nourishment.

Now it is true that European civilization has a large share of materialism, but it is the height of folly not to see its spiritual aspects. It has been outstandingly successful in the pursuit of material interests, but these successes have been the result of intellectual effort, of imagination, of the creative spirit. Look at the Western philosophers, scholars, creators! It is not only a Descartes and a Pasteur who obviously are idealists; test pilots and similar persons who risk their lives for the advancement of knowledge are not materialists.[138]

Yes, there are poets and philosophers who feel confined by Western civilization—yet they will give their lives for it. There are some who look East but they would never wish to lead an Eastern life. And then, dissatisfaction with one's life merely shows that one is alive and progressing. Only the low will be completely satisfied with his condition. As long as you see the European criticize his civilization, you know that he is developing upward. When a European tells us that his civilization is materialistic and hateful, either he is intent upon its further improvement, or he wishes to beguile us into staying where we are, so the West will keep its prerogatives.

Moreover, the spiritual East for which some Westerners profess a longing is not the Near East. Do not forget that the roots of Near Eastern and European mentality are the same. Are the great re-

ligions "spirit" in the East, "matter" in the West? No, the East of the European dreamers is the Far East, whose thought has hardly any connection with ours. And do we want to embrace the thought of a Far East that in turn wishes to Europeanize?

This tale of the spiritual East will not do. And those Egyptians who call for Eastern *rūḥiyya*, spirituality, know that they are jesting and that they would never choose for themselves the life of China or India. But this kind of talk is dangerous because it will prejudice the young against what they know, and turn their sympathies toward the unknown. The origin of these tales of East and West is the general ignorance about both East and West. Acquaintance with the two worlds stops at the externals. There is no way to protect our youth from such pseudo-knowledge except education.[139]

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The first and in a sense the only writer of the period after the second World War to attempt a systematic appraisal of Islam, ʿAbdallāh ʿAlī al-Qaṣīmī,[140] is, like Ṭaha Ḥusain, concerned with the mentality of his civilization. But, unlike Ṭaha Ḥusain, Qaṣīmī does not propose to argue the progressive potentialities of Islamic civilization and its ability to regain strength through Westernization, from a realization of historical or intellectual kinship between the Near East and the West. He analyzes the dominant attitudes of his society with a view to eliminating those that impede its advance. This advance is conceived in terms of, and judged by, political power. This approach makes for a certain flatness when it comes to intercultural relations and the comprehension of the West in general; but, to compensate, it yields a lively and veristic portrayal of present-day Muslim mentality, both in what Qaṣīmī observes and in how he observes it. In this respect it is superior to the chessmenlike abstractions—Europe, Egypt, the East—with which Ṭaha Ḥusain operates.[141]

"Ignorance based on religious doctrine, *al-jahl al-iʿtiqādī*, has tied our people with knot upon knot; the best any man can do is to untie one of these knots. . . ." These, the opening words of the Preface, indicate as in a flash Qaṣīmī's position and his goal.

In the "Dedication to King ʿAbdalʿazīz Āl Suʿūd,"[142] Qaṣīmī presents what might be called his philosophy of history, limited though it is to an interpretation of the earliest period of Islam. When the Arabs set out to conquer the world they meant to free mankind

from serving the creature (instead of the Creator), to lead them from constraint into freedom, and from the injustice of the older faiths to the justice of Islam. Their sudden rise becomes understandable only when it is realized that certain powers always exist *in potentia*. The Arabs, nay the Muslims, of today are backward in relation to the Western nations. This backwardness is not due to any natural inferiority but to certain causes that can be diagnosed. The achievement and preservation of independence is contingent solely on a nation's innate, *dâtî*, power of intellectual and material production, *al-intâj al-ʿaqlî wa'l-mâddî*, on the part of its individual members. The difference between ourselves and the West is but a difference in this productive capacity. As the supremacy of the strong over the weak is a law of nature, that of the more over the less productive nations is inevitable.

In an introductory statement[143] Qaṣîmî points out that the low state of Islam in every field of human endeavor carries over into the depressed situation of the individual Muslim as compared to the individual Christian in whichever country the two groups are living side by side. When it is urged that a religious renewal, that is, the revival of early Islam and the strict implementation of the *sharʿ*, the Canon Law,[144] will reverse this situation, it must unfortunately be said that it is only a material recovery that will lead to greatness in this world. The spiritual qualities of the combatants had no influence on the result of World War II. Similarly, America's superiority over the Muslim lands is clearly not due to her faith and to her religious and spiritual qualities, but rather to her technical, economic, and scientific qualities. Since it is not our religious weakness that keeps us from equaling America's power, it is pathetic to watch the *sancta simplicitas* with which the Muslims are apt to follow any religious leader. The religious person is inclined toward a negative and ineffective, in short, a pietistic approach to life. This is not the fault of religion, *dîn*, as such, but of the human soul.

The realization is painful that our cultural immobility cannot be overcome, unless, and in proportion as, foreign influence and foreign training are admitted. With a guarded allusion to the Yemen Qaṣîmî notes that the most isolated state in the Near East is also the most backward and, conversely, that the most advanced state in the region is the one enjoying most European contacts (Egypt?). Why is it that the Arabs that have graduated from Western institutions do not promote human knowledge through their independent

efforts, while Europeans and Americans do? Unaware of their sickness, the Arabs have not given thought to its causes. Fundamentally, what is wrong is the attitude toward man. Man has not understood himself, nor his relations to his fellows nor his position in the universe. Nor has he understood the causal structure of life in this world. Once our people will have comprehended the eternal laws of this world, they will be able to adjust their actions to them and their endeavor will be repaid by rapid progress.

The great divide is between such peoples (and individuals) who do, and such who do not, believe in themselves and in humanity. The progressive have faith in the natural richness of man, and it is this belief which makes them rise.[145] But "every people that disbelieves in humanity, *insâniyya*—humanity in general, their own, and that of others—that disbelieves in its gifts, and its essential, natural richness, and believes that mankind is fettered by chains and limitations that cannot be broken through and stripped off, that it is not free to use its strength, and that the road is not open to it, the road that is without a confining end and without a goal that compels a halt—yes, any nation that holds this view and this belief about humanity will inevitably fall behind in its aspirations and weaken in its actions; it will stop short, unable to soar in the limitless sky, and will be content in its day with the paltry and mean and a share easily obtained."[146] Once faith in him is lacking, man appears to be an abject creature, powerless to pit himself against nature, bowing to every major difficulty, accepting disease and poverty, waiting for God to set things right—and forgetting what He has revealed: "O ye who have believed, if ye help Allâh He will help you."[147]

There are, then, two types of *insâniyya*, one progress-minded, successful, knowledgeable, strong; the other, abject, frustrated, ignorant, weak. The Arabs, unfortunately, are of the second. For a thousand years Muslim civilization has fed on the conviction that man was not created for future greatness, but rather that he was created weak in body and mind, and inescapably so. He is dust, created from dust, headed toward dust—and how may dust achieve knowledge?

> The limit of the mind's advance is [the length of its] tether; most of the effort of the learned is error.
>
> As long as we live we do not profit from our research except for collecting rumor and hearsay.
>
> [Faḫr ad-Dîn ar-Râzî, d. 1209]

The reason for the idea that stagnation is pleasing to God and knowledge to be shunned, and beyond this, for the general doubt of human potentialities, is the belief that to vilify man is to glorify God. The Muslim imagines that sound faith must be based on the realization of an abyss between Creator and creature. God is perfect in every respect, so man must be imperfect in every respect. Man's humiliation will exalt the Lord. Aspiration after knowledge is like an encroachment upon the divine, especially when, as in the case of microscopy, the previously hidden is to be uncovered. Every spokesman of the community, poet and preacher, exegete and mystic, feels he has failed in praising God, unless he has taken down man.

This attitude persists in the face of clear-cut statements of Revelation. The glory of the creature is the glory of the Creator. The perfect will create the perfect; the closer a creature stands to God, the more perfect it is, as witness prophets and angels. The mere fact that man was chosen as receptacle of Revelation bespeaks his rank and his potentialities.[148]

Man's rise from the state of nature to civilization, enthusiastically described in picturesque detail, provides the best evidence for his greatness. The lesson of this survey of human progress is twofold: (1) Every advance doubles man's power to advance. Thus accelerated and unending progress is assured. The objection that there were periods of stagnation and even of retrogression is met with the statement that the upward development continues "underground," comparable to the increasing productivity of soil allowed to lie fallow.[149] (2) It is wrong to claim, as some (unnamed) Western scholars do, that differences in the cultural level are not only permanent but ever widening. The error lies in neglecting the hidden human potential. As matters stand, the West simply has better realized its material and intellectual possibilities, while the East continues to sleep.

Tradition keeps alive many sayings, supposed to go back to the Prophet, that assert the continuous decline of the world. "Never will be a time except a worse time will follow it." "Everything decreases except evil which is on the increase." These sentiments continue to be transmitted, although development, and, specifically, development upward, in animal life, vegetable life, and even inanimate nature, has long been accepted as a fundamental verity.[150]

By telling the development of the world to the coming of man, Qaṣîmî illustrates the evolutionary view. Man himself is now

stronger in body and mind than his ancestors of some 300 years ago. The development of civilization is made possible only through the development of man. All life moves forever onward, nothing ever turns back. This is the teaching of science, but not only of science, for the Koran tells the same story. "What is the matter with you that ye expect not in Allâh seriousness [of purpose], seeing that He has created you by stages?"[151]

The religious leaders of Islam managed to force the gaze of the people backward, so they would detect perfection in the past, decay in the present, and the anticipation of more decay in the future. This view has been adopted by all. It is the gravest error which the *ijmâʿ*, the consensus, has accepted.[152]

Qaṣîmî is unable to understand the persistence of this attitude. Do not religion, the evidence of our senses, reason, and history equally belie it? Doubtless the prophets and their adherents were better than their unenlightened ancestors! The mere existence of Islam should make short shrift of the theory of decline.

The notion that the perfection of the ancients should be imitated results in (1) all intellectual effort being directed toward the interpretation of past intellectual achievement; (2) a great deal of work being done with very few results; much is written but there is little intellectual initiative; (3) the perpetuation of fables, *hurâfât*, and the refusal to go beyond them. This is why the *abâṭil*, the empty droolings, of Ghazzâlî and Shaʿrânî are being kept alive. The principal difficulty confronting the reform-minded in Muslim lands consists in the fact

that those whose reform they desire see perfection in those ancients in whose books those nonsensical stories are found. There is no other way to get those unfortunate masses out of their position than to teach them to disbelieve in them [i.e., in those ancient authorities], to doubt them, and to develop a low opinion of them and their work; to make them realize that [those authors] are much below their opinion of them, that they are farther removed from perfection than their own contemporaries and those that came after [the writers in question]; and to have them learn how to have confidence in oneself, one's mind, and one's possibilities [literally, disposition, *istiʿdâd*].

I look at this heavy, crushing heritage that is thrown in the path of the Muslims and at those books whose numbers are frightening and whose count cannot be taken . . . and I am scared and my thoughts wander off in all directions, but then they bring me back to one point, agreed that there is no rescue, unless we be able to deny adherence to this heritage, and that such denial, *kufr*, is impossible, unless we know how to push down the bequeathers [of this heritage] from their sky-high thrones which we have created for them to the best of our intellectual and religious abilities. . . . Can this be done? But there is no other way.[153]

This writer wonders whether a Western reader will be able to appreciate the enormity of this explicit call on the Muslims to abandon a major, and to them the most significant, part of their heritage.

(4) This backward-mindedness finally results in the tornness of the soul of its professors, in the development of a "split personality," for man is forced by the nature of life to move onward in its stream whether he knows it or not.

And when his thoughts and beliefs do not recognize this forward moving development, but rather deny and reject it, and desire to take him backward, so he remains behind the stream of life, or even travels in the opposite direction, he comes under the jurisdiction, *ḥukm*, of two opposing agents . . . and he is unable to dedicate himself completely to one of them. Inescapably he will become divided against himself and waste his strength piecemeal; even worse, he will be torn between those two agents, as anything will be torn that falls between two strong and competing forces.[154]

Those that remain perplexed cannot be expected to accomplish anything worthy of admiration and duration; nor are they likely to find real happiness in this life.

Nations as individuals must be single-minded to succeed. Those that are not belong neither to the past nor to the present: they will never be certain about the course they should take. Moreover, the belief in the authority of the ancients leads to the greatest folly of all, *taqlīd*—the slavish imitation of precedent and tradition. There is nothing more destructive of independent thought and of confidence in one's own mental abilities. It breeds the presumption that if something seems wrong in ancient books, it must be due to the reader's obtuseness rather than to the author's imperfection. This is the approach along which the great Muslim institutions of learning will proceed. But it is unthinkable that civilization should ever grow without doubt, *shakk*, and independent understanding, *fahm*.

"We must realize that all human existence and all human civilizations are predicated on the idea of development, and on the idea that man is constantly prepared to march forward and to progress in every direction open to him, and again on the idea that what is before him is better than what is behind him."[155] The higher a nation has climbed, the stronger this conviction.

The decisive problem confronting the faithful is this: The Muslim's belief in God as the Supreme Cause prevents man from conceiving of himself as a causer, *sabab;* this conception of himself, in turn, prevents man from succeeding in this world. How

then can the religious Muslim combine the idea of the Supreme Cause with that of himself as a cause within his immediate sphere?

The anthropomorphic conception of God which is cherished by most believers leads them to assume that He acts like the rulers to whom they are accustomed, and therefore stimulates such morally objectionable behavior as had proved opportune in their contacts with their human superiors. Simultaneously, the believer establishes his relation with God on the model of the infant-parent relationship. His desire to show himself grateful for God's kindness in creating him deflects too much of his time and energy from the tasks of this life. Man is directed by his hopes. His highest hope is for a blissful afterlife—one more motive for neglecting his duties to this world. Here is the explanation for the victory of the worldly minded Muʿâwiya (caliph, 661–80) over the pious ʿAlî (caliph, 656–61); and here lies, too, the explanation for the poverty of the pious who engage in commerce. The European development perfectly illustrates the point: Europe remained weak as long as she clung to the Hereafter as her guiding hope, but became dazzlingly strong when she transferred her hopes to this world.[156]

The disbelief in causality which makes anything appear possible and deprives one of a standard for assessing events and for planning is at the bottom of the corrosive attitude of the religionists. If they had the power, their sway would be more oppressive than anything the world is experiencing today.

With all this, it is not suggested that religion harms people by interposing itself between them and perfection. On the contrary, in its nature and spirit religion is a strong incentive toward reason and right behavior. Only when misinterpreted religion does damage and, unfortunately up to the present, man seems to have been unable to understand religion in any but the wrong way.

The great purposes of mankind always outrun man's preparedness. Religion is no exception. This is why it is often fought as an obstacle to the upward development of mankind. Actually, the obstacle is not religion, but the religionists. And a time will come when mankind will understand the real essence of religion.

Mankind goes through three stages: no religion, vain religion (as described in this book), true religion. Of the three the second is obviously the worst, as it entails complete weakness, national and individual.

It does our Western overlords no harm that we adhere to this brand of *dîn*. In fact, they approve of our attachment to it. They

fear and respect a Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk, the Turkish reformer and president, d. 1938), but they are pleased with statesmen of the type of that Arab ruler who during a recent epidemic barred medical help from his country, declaring that the disease, *ṭá'ún*, was a mercy, *raḥma*, from God. So the Westerners labor to widen the power of the *shaikhs*.

This distorted faith of the second stage is a blight, but faith as such is not. The problem lies in the fact that mankind as yet is not prepared for the true faith of the third stage. This problem is far from solved. What is needed (and what Qaṣîmî has done in this book) is that men should expend time and effort to develop people's understanding. Purification and rectification of religion—that was the great message of all the prophets.

III

Qaṣîmî's book is primarily a political statement. He calls for action as openly as he dares to, and his occasional professions of religious loyalty emphasize his realization of having outdistanced his public at the most delicate points. He wishes to bring about a change of heart in Islam; once reality has been faced as it should be faced, the specific reforms will follow as a matter of course. So Qaṣîmî himself remains somewhat vague, with the usual result that his analysis compensates by an element of timeless validity as an intellectual document for the lack of assistance toward the formulation of such measures as a stirred-up reader might wish to promote. The unfolding of man's potential in a secularized and activated Muslim society is to be brought about by the harnessing of Islam's will to power, which is at present slumbering or disorganized.

Qaṣîmî is not interested in Western civilization as such. He is fascinated by it in its twin role of a model and an opponent. He sees the efficiency of the West, its self-reliance, its will to work, to plan, to take risks, to undergo change, and he co-ordinates these traits with some of the more obvious features of Western political and religious organization. But this is all. There is no concern for the West's intellectual history, the philosophy underlying its expansionist drives, the emotional significance of technological and explorational adventure, its conflicting moods of breathlessness and sadness, the self-sacrifice of generation upon generation for the sake of advances that are instantly devaluated by the realization of their provisionalness. In so far as such a statement may be made

at all, one feels tempted to say that Qaṣīmī does not have any real relationship to the West in the way Ṭaha Ḥusain does. He does not ask himself whether Islam is by descent and structure a part of the West, nor does he attempt to lay bare kindred strands in the two civilizations, or to separate what in his world is attuned to the East and what to the West, in terms of historical or cultural psychology. Ṭaha Ḥusain bases his call for Westernization on a philosophy of history or at least a comprehensive interpretation of Egypt's position through the ages. In Lebanon, the group most ably spoken for by the young poet, Saʿīd ʿAql, advocates Westernization, because to themselves they are Westerners standing guard on the easternmost outpost of Europe and verbalizing their affiliation through the symbol of their Phoenician descent that is felt to set them apart from the Arab-Muslim East surrounding them. But Qaṣīmī has no over-all concept of, say, Mediterranean unity and East-West kinship. To him, the task before Islam is the regaining of its power; and Westernization is the only means of setting Islam free.

This attitude accounts for Qaṣīmī's unhistorical approach to his own civilization as well. What is more serious from his own political viewpoint, it also accounts for his shirking of one of the fundamental problems of his world, the ultimate integration through a national loyalty of the various denominational bodies that face each other primarily as Muslims and Christians.

The Muslim state from its inception down to its last supernational representative, the Ottoman empire, allowed the non-Muslim communities to administer their own affairs in accordance with their statute; taxation, foreign relations, and policy-making in general remained with the Muslims who also bore the burden of military service. Being in, but not of, the Muslim state, subjected to social and professional discrimination, and animated by feelings of insecurity and a somewhat aimless resentment against their masters, the Christian communities, especially in the outlying parts of the empire, withdrew to a surprising extent from the life of the commonwealth.

On both sides of the fence the solidarity-circle was coterminous with the religious community. From the very beginning covenants had turned the fact of Muslim supremacy into a right. Theory insisted on lines neatly drawn, and gradually practice conformed. Ghazzālī, for instance, discussing Companionship, points out that no harm may be done to the treaty-protected non-Muslim subject,

except for turning away from him and treating him with disdain. He should never be greeted first. His greeting may be returned, but, on the whole, it is best to refrain from meeting him socially or professionally. To enjoy common entertainment and to allow the familiarity of friendship to develop—this would provoke such disapproval as to put it, in Ghazzâlî's opinion, almost on a par with a legally prohibited action.[157]

As time went on, the estrangement hardened. The first contacts with Christian Europe sharpened the tension. "Christians *versus* Moslems: this was my first notion of collective human relationships. To my mind at the age of five or six," Edward Atiyah (1903—) relates, "the world consisted entirely of Moslems and Christians in antagonism to one another—two natural inevitable groups, as natural and inevitable as the world itself, to one of which—the weaker but more righteous one—I belonged. . . . There can be little in a kitten's political consciousness save the all absorbing relationship between cats and dogs."[158]

The spread of nationalism with its concomitant (partial) release of the individual from his confinement within his clan or denominational group, and again the strain imposed on the whole nation of maintaining and using political independence, have taken much of the sting out of Muslim-Christian relations. But the religious groups with their strong claim to first loyalties persist; and even without the memories of history, recent European minority experiences would explain the nervousness of the Christian Arabs, many times outnumbered, that still has to be counted with as an ever present motive force.

The Syrian constitution provides for a Muslim president. The Lebanese includes in its Article 59 this provision: "A titre provisoire et dans une intention de justice et concorde les communautés [i.e., the denominational communities] seront représentées, d'une manière équitable, dans les fonctions publiques et dans la composition du ministère, sans que cela puisse porter préjudice à l'intérêt de l'État." In practice, this means that, e.g., the president will be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister, a Sunnite Muslim, etc.

It is not proposed to question the wisdom of this arrangement. It is, however, necessary to see in the reflection by the statute of the actual facts of power distribution and emotional affiliation a symptom of that more widely obtaining situation in which modern foreign relations are pitted against, or wedded to, "medieval"

domestic relations. This conflict, in turn, mirrors on the highest political level the ceaseless battle between the ancestral and the new, in loyalties, in mores, in patterns of self-expression, that rages in every community, in every family, in every heart. Qaṣîmî acknowledges with remarkable frankness and precision the division within each individual, but he fails to relate this division to the larger struggle and to assess its implications for the political regeneration of the Islamic world. Nor does he seem to perceive the frequent incompatibility of political and cultural aspirations, as witness the peculiar position of, and attitude toward, the foreign schools in Muslim countries. Desirable though they will be as providing a generally superior type of instruction and unquestionably the best introduction to the West and to Westernization, they are often considered unbearable or at least undesirable from a more narrowly political viewpoint. The nationalistic wish for quick development of a numerous educated class is apt to conflict with the nationalistic irritation at having to rely on foreign institutions that may be felt to be embarrassing as vestiges, or suspect as footholds, of imperialism.

IV

The opinions of these and other intellectual leaders, as well as direct observation of the contemporary Muslim East, point to reconciliation of tradition with the demands of modern, of Western, thought as the foremost problem of Islamic civilization. The desideratum is an adjustment entailing a minimum of actual change but sufficiently revitalizing to lead to both a political and a cultural resurgence. What exactly are to be the guiding values of this resurgence is not yet clear.

Old and new ideas and ideals are tested, the receptiveness for the new is great, but greater still the reluctance to let go of the old.

To be confronted, day-in, day-out, with conflicting values, conflicting doctrines, conflicting emotions, cannot but result in skepticism. This skepticism attaches most readily to the newly adopted moral values not yet consecrated by the collective conscience. As the mores of the community have not yet caught up with the new moral ideas, these ideas operate in a vacuum and their advocates easily become suspected of hypocrisy.[159] The method of education prevailing since the nineteenth century is another reason for the skepticism of the upper classes. The incessant contradiction between

old-type dogmatic thinking and the modern scientific approach leads through intellectual insecurity to moral skepticism, or even nihilism.

Independence alone remains as an unquestioned value, but politics are apt to aggravate rather than resolve ethical difficulties.

Progress, as was most frequently stated by Qasimî, presupposes cultural optimism. The yearning for a political and spiritual renascence implies the conviction that human affairs tend to improve, that change tends to be for the better. This belief runs counter to the general feeling of traditional Islam that sees its history as a perpetual decline. The "best" Islam was that obtaining in the days of the prophet Muhammad, the next best that practiced by his immediate successors. The world deteriorates and Islam with it. This process is inevitable. The splendor of some particular epoch, the obvious advance registered here or there in a later age do not refute this "cultural primitivism"[160] in the view of the Muslim. Temporary oscillations cannot deceive him. It is true that this attitude is on the wane in the Arab intelligentsia. Nevertheless, it is still strong and even a man like Haikal is unable to discard it.[161] Moral skepticism and despair of progress are the deadly enemies of democracy. Yet, democracy is the dream of large Muslim circles. The compatibility of parliamentary institutions with the koranic legislation and, more recently, the identity of the democratic attitude toward man and state with that preached by the Prophet have been favorite themes of Muslim publicists. Despite the dearth of democratic institutions in the Islamic past, the principles of democracy as well as the rudiments of representative government are found firmly grounded in Muhammad's injunctions.

The editorial of the leading Egyptian magazine, *al-Hilâl*, for December, 1941, maintains that the Greeks created democracy and that the Arabs preserved it in the Middle Ages. "The religious movements of the Arab East have ever been based on freedom, on equality, and on the Rights of Man, and those principles have become firmly rooted in the Arabic nations from the earliest times." Taha Husain (1889—) is convinced that democracy is the best form of government known to man.[162] Muhammad Farîd Wajdî declares that Islam is democratic because it is universal and because it gives to the individual the responsibility for his salvation. He sees parliament commended in the Koran when those are praised "whose affairs are guided by Mutual Counsel (*shûrà*)."[163] In another passage, Wajdî points out, God asks His prophet "to consult

them [the believers] in the affairs [of war]."[164] Equality is proclaimed when God enjoins Muḥammad to address the people in these terms: "O men! verily we have created you male and female, and we have divided you into peoples and tribes that ye might have knowledge of one another. Truly the most worthy of honor in the sight of God is he who feareth Him most."[165] Racism is fought by quoting the Prophet's saying: "God has made you abandon the filth of [the period of] Ignorance [the pagan period] and the boasting with your ancestors. The Arab has no excellence over and above the non-Arab nor the white man over and above the black unless through fear of God and through good works." Wajdî holds that to fight for democracy is to uphold the tradition (*sunna*) of the Prophet.[166] And it is in the second successor of Muḥammad, ʿUmar (A.D. 634–44), that the Muslim finds the perfect embodiment of the spirit of democracy.

One psychological difficulty impeding the Muslim modernist would be removed if he could assume a less twisted reaction to the phenomenon of cultural borrowing. All too frequently the reaction resembles that of Haikal to the idea of evolution: he rejects it politely but then shows with pride that it is indigenous to Islam, having been developed by Ibn Haldûn.[167] Innovation still has to be made palatable by tracing it in the early days of the faith. Affected by this spirit, even Ṭaha Ḥusain in his study of Ibn Ḥaldûn[168] tries to demonstrate the harmony of modern philosophy both with the traditional beliefs of Islam and with Arab medieval philosophy.[169]

Islam has always combined a capacity for absorption of foreign elements with a certain reluctance to admit their foreign origin. This reluctance was due in part to the reflection such an admission might cast on its postulated superiority, but in part it simply resulted from the completeness with which those borrowings had been covered with what might be called an Islamic patina. Side by side with this readiness to borrow and assimilate there went a stubborn desire to eliminate foreign methods of thought and foreign scales of value. Elements of material civilization as well as political institutions and administrative techniques were welcomed, ideology, whenever possible, rejected. Usefulness remained the ultimate criterion of acceptability. The individual result was taken over, the system that justified it neglected. The enormous contribution of the Hellenistic world to Islamic civilization did not include the human ideal that had given unity to the Greek achievement.[170]

At a rather early stage did the Arabs take from the Greeks "some mental habits which they never lost; namely, the ability to discuss problems according to the categories of formal logic, the appreciation of purely theoretical speculation, and above all, the acknowledgment of a 'secular' science, fully independent of any religious sectarianism."[171] But the cultural development of the period from *ca.* 850 to 1400 could, with some justification, be described as that of the gradual effacement of the Greek touch.

The same danger of missing the essential for the more immediately practical exists today. It may be too pessimistic to say that Islamic civilization got off to a wrong start when, in the nineteenth century, attention became focused on the useful in European civilization rather than on the spirit responsible for the development of its impressive material accomplishment. But Islam is afraid of accepting the fundamentals of the occidental development lest it lose its center of gravity. The one basic idea proffered by the West that has been truly incorporated in Muslim thinking as a tenet of faith is the concept of evolution. And in the case of this idea it may be said that its acceptance is owed less to its theoretical truth than to the hope it offers for a resurgence of Muslim power and grandeur.[172] The belief in evolution is not a result of scientific deliberation; it is the rationalization of the deepest longing of the contemporary East.

Muslim writers are fond of praising the identity of Church and State in Islam as a source of strength. From the point of view of a successful modernist reform this identity would rather seem a cause of retardation and of weakness. In support, one could simply point out that Turkey had to introduce that separation when settling down in earnest to Westernization.

It is, moreover, undeniable that the elasticity for change of the Occident was greatly enhanced by the division of Church and State; (*a*) because the Church did not control every aspect of the believer's life—the concept of the State's rights over the individual, in certain regions the Roman Law, having been accepted centuries ago; (*b*) because breaking with the Church did not mean breaking with Western civilization, nor did the remodeling of civilization necessarily mean a break with religion; (*c*) because reorganization of the State did not necessarily affect religion.

The more closely Islam identifies Church and State, the more it will be forced to build a "modern" house on fictitious traditionalist foundations.

The less, on the other hand, Islam considers its spiritual basis affected by temporal change, the more readily will it embark on its time-honored method of modernization, to wit, the reinterpretation of the Holy Book.

Islam can, as little as Catholicism, yield its claim to be the guardian of the final and exclusive truth.

Thus, on principle, the West, or Christendom and Judaism, can never expect more than collaboration on the basis of toleration (as opposed to spiritual equality). But an Islam inspired by a revelation reinterpreted as a Book of humanist directives stressing morality and not legality as the ethical aim of religion and relegating the obsolete legal, social, economic precepts to the background, will be rid of its two paralyzing dilemmas: whether to adopt the attitude of the West to reality, which is at the bottom of its scientific control of nature, or reject it as materialism; and whether to adopt or reject its attitude that holds criticism permissible in the face of any authority.[173]

There can be no doubt but that the East has achieved an appreciable measure of success in its efforts, and it is more than likely that this success will continue at an accelerated rate. However, not only does the West, too, move on, but there is nothing to suggest that the Near East is preparing to outgrow its present phase of derivative ideology, derivative reform, derivative technology, and so forth. Thus, the very process of advancement is deprived of some of its satisfaction; suspicion may never be relaxed, pride constantly remains on edge. The development of atomic energy may devaluate the Near Eastern oil reserves within a few decades, but however heavy the economic dependency of the West on Eastern raw materials, it would not free the Islamic world from its present imitative or adaptive mentality. Only the consciousness of contributing significantly to the common core of cultural fundamentals could relieve the psychological tension between Westernizing Islam and the West. The question must also be asked: Where are the intrinsic limits of cultural transformation or cultural borrowing in general? In other words, how far can one-sided Westernization (as opposed to the interaction in the development of Hellenistic culture) be carried? In the terms of Alfred Weber's analysis[174] that have been applied to the problems of the modern Near East by A. Bonné,[175] transferability seems confined to those elements that may migrate "from people to people, thanks to the use of technical, practical, and applied arts and methods." The Westernization potential of

the Muslim Near East clearly includes "a higher rationalization of thought and the coordination of economy, technique, and the State," but it is not likely to include "the underlying principles as embodied in religion, philosophy, art, or rational scientific theory."[176]

For almost a century the Islamic East has been astir. The example of the West, the pressures of defeat and foreign control, of social and economic unrest, of ambition and pride, have led the peoples of the East to rediscover the will to grow and to assert themselves. They have gradually secured a large measure of control over their internal development, fighting the West as a political force and their own tradition as a retarding power. Quick alternation of sanguine hopes and cynical dejection has marked the mood of the Near East over the past decades. The element that gives to Qasîmî's book its sweep and confers on it a more than literary or political significance is the emergence of a new and fiery belief in man. It is impossible as yet to say how representative this enthusiastic faith is of the sentiment of the Muslim world. At the moment one is almost obliged to consider it Qasîmî's private attitude. But he may well be the harbinger of a genuine and general reversal of the Muslim outlook on man that may, as in the Western Renaissance five centuries ago, release dormant resources of creative energy. It is the revaluation of man that has at all times presaged a cultural renewal.

NOTES

1. *The Near East; Problems and Prospects,* ed. Ph. W. Ireland (Chicago, 1942), p. 60.

2. The observations contained in this paper, while in many instances based on Arab sources, apply *mutatis mutandis* to the whole of the Muslim world.

3. See E. Rosenthal, *Ibn Khalduns Gedanken über den Staat* (München and Berlin, 1932), pp. 50–51.

4. *Prolegomena,* ed. Quatremère (Paris, 1858), I, 165–220; trans. De Slane (Paris, 1862–68), I, 184–253; Taha Husain in his thesis, *La Philosophie sociale d'Ibn Khaldoun* (Paris, 1918), pp. 93–100, has a good summary of Ibn Haldûn's somewhat prolix discussion.

5. *Naishariyya,* naturalism, from English *nature.*

6. *Ar-Radd 'alà 'd-dahriyyîn,* trans. from the Persian into Arabic by Muhammad 'Abduh (Cairo, 1925), pp. 53–57.

7. *Ibid.,* pp. 57–59.

8. *Ibid.,* p. 60.

9. *Ibid.,* pp. 64–69.

10. *Ibid.,* p. 66.

11. *Ibid.,* p. 70.

12. *Ibid.,* p. 23.

13. Koran, 13:12. The passage is taken from C. C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism*

in Egypt (London, 1933), pp. 15–16. Jamâl ad-Dîn's extreme concern with *happiness* reminds us of Aristotle who, too, stresses happiness as the supreme end of human effort.

14. (Muḥammad ʿAbduh,) *Rissalat al-tauḥîd (risâlat at-tauḥîd); exposé de la religion musulmane; traduite de l'arabe avec une introduction sur la vie et les idées du Cheikh M. Abdou par B. Michel et le Cheikh Moustapha Abdel Razik* (Muṣṭafâ ʿAbdarrâziq, 1885—), (Paris, 1925), Introd., p. xl.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. xlvi–xlvii.

16. *Risâla*, pp. 104–36; cf. Michel, Introd., pp. lxxx–lxxxii, Muḥammad Farîd Wajdî (1875–1954), a member of ʿAbduh's circle, affirms in the same vein that Islam is a religion conducive to happines both Here and Hereafter. For an analysis of his *Islam and Civilization* (Cairo, 1899), cf. Adams, *op. cit.*, pp. 244–45, and J. Lecerf, "Le Mouvement philosophique contemporain en Syrie et en Egypte," *Mélanges de l'Institut Français de Damas (Section des Arabisants)*, I (1929), 27–64, on pp. 60–61. Introducing the periodical *Islamic Culture*, Sayyid Ameer Ali says of Islam: "One Faith alone holds out the promise that the world is not doomed to relapse into darkness or become enwrapt in gross materialism. It still holds aloft the lamp to the road which leads humanity to spiritual vitality." (*Islamic Culture*, I [1927], 1.)

17. Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

18. Michel, Introd., pp. xlvi–xlvii.

19. For his biography, cf. *Oriente Moderno*, VIII (1928), 434–36.

20. 1st ed., 1893, the quotations refer to the revised edition (London, 1922), p. lxxi.

21. *Spirit of Islam*, p. 218.

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 72–82.

23. *Ibid.*, p. vii.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 137–38.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 138.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 175–76.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 399.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 403.

30. Koran, 14:4.

31. *Spirit of Islam*, p. 410.

32. *Ibid.*, pp. 441–42.

33. Oxford University Press, 1934.

34. *Reconstruction of Religious Thought*, p. 17C.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

36. *Ibid.*, p. 120.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 131.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 146.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 147.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 139.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 148.

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 151–52.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 154–55.

45. *Ibid.*, pp. 158–59.

46. 1914, 2d ed., 1929. Cf. H. A. R. Gibb, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (hereafter *BSOS*), VII (1933–35), 8–12.

47. *Ḥayât Muḥammad* (2d ed.; Cairo, 1935).

48. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 16 and 60. In a similar spirit Amîr Shakîb Arslân (1869–1946) maintains the superiority of native scholarship in the field of Arabic literature and sharply rebukes Ṭaha Ḥusain (1889—) for following the methods and adopting the viewpoints of Western authorities; cf. his criticism of Ṭaha Ḥusain, *Fî 'l-adab al-jâhilî*, which appeared in Cairo in 1929 (trans. G. Widmer, *Welt des Islams*, XIX [1937], 35–38). *Al-Adab al-jâhilî* is the title of the revised edition (Cairo, 1927) of Ṭaha Ḥusain's sensational *ash-Shi'r al-jâhilî* (Cairo, 1926).

51. *Ḥayât Muḥammad*, pp. 17 and 58.

52. *Ibid.*, pp. 188–91.

53. From the point of view of presentation this discussion is, however, one of the most beautiful passages of the book.

54. *Ḥayât Muḥammad*, pp. 27–28.

55. *Ibid.*, pp. 42–43.

56. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 499–501.

58. *Ibid.*, pp. 501–28. Note again the emphasis on happiness.

59. *Al-Islâm wa-uṣûl al-ḥukm* (Cairo, 1925) (French trans. by L. Bercher, *Revue des Etudes Musulmanes*, VII [1933], 353–91; VIII [1934], 163–222); cf. also Adams, *op. cit.*, pp. 259–68.

60. *Al-Islâm wa-uṣûl al-ḥukm*, pp. 81 ff.

61. Muḥammad Rashîd Riḍà, "State and Church or Khalifate and Sultanate," *al-Manâr*, II (1899), 353–60, particularly pp. 357 and 358 (in Arabic); cf. also Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

62. *Al-Islâm wa-uṣûl al-ḥukm*, pp. 76–77.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 77.

64. *Al-Islâm wa'l-ḥaḍâra al-'arabiyya* (Cairo, 1934–36). 2 vols.

65. According to a letter from Professor Arthur Jeffery, dated November 13, 1944.

66. *Al-Islâm wa'l-ḥaḍâra al-'arabiyya*, Preface, p. 9.

67. A follower of 'Abduh, who was particularly interested in social reform, 1865–1908.

68. *Al-Islâm wa'l-ḥaḍâra al-'arabiyya*, I, pp. 2–4.

69. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 11–12.

70. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 22–28.

71. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 34 ff.

72. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 38–43.

73. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 42–43.

74. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 43–44.

75. The Egyptian remains unnamed. Unless Kurd 'Alî wishes to characterize a certain section of the Egyptian intelligentsia under this guise, Ṭaha Ḥusain or perhaps Salâma Mûsà (1888—) or some member of their circles may be alluded to. On Salâma Mûsà, a Christian Egyptian, cf. T. Khemiri and G. Kampffmeyer, "Leaders in Contemporary Arabic Literature," *Welt des Islams*, IX (1930), Heft 2–4, pp. 31–33; on Ṭaha Ḥusain, *ibid.*, pp. 34–37.

76. *Al-Islâm wa'l-ḥaḍâra al-'arabiyya*, I, p. 44.

77. *Ibid.*, I, p. 45.

78. *Ibid.*, I, p. 46.

79. *Ibid.*, I, p. 47.

80. Cf. "Leaders . . . ," p. 37.

81. *Al-Islâm wa'l-ḥaḍâra al-'arabiyya*, I, p. 50.

82. *Ibid.*, I, p. 55.

83. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 57–58.

84. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 59–60.

85. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 60–61.

86. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 63–110.

87. *Ibid.*, I, p. 67.

88. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 67–76.

89. *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden, 1913–34), II, pp. 100–5.

90. *Al-Islām wa'l-ḥaḍāra al-ʿarabiyya*, I, pp. 75–76.

91. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 76–79.

92. *Ibid.*, I, p. 78.

93. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 79–85.

94. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 57–58.

95. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 85–93.

96. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 93–97.

97. *Ibid.*, I, p. 92.

98. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 97–100.

99. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 100–4.

100. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 105–10.

101. On pp. 111–343, Kurd ʿAlī presents selected chapters of Arab history, dealing with pre-Islamic Arabia, its Islamization, the Arab contribution to science, the influence of the Arabic language on Eastern and Western tongues, the influence of the Arabs on the conquered countries and on Western sciences and arts, the civilization of Spain, and Sicily, the Crusades, and finally the attacks on the Arab world on the part of the Mongols, the Turks, and the Western powers. However rewarding, stimulating, and debatable this presentation, it contributes little to our problem of Islamic self-interpretation and Islamic interpretation of the West. Kurd ʿAlī is inclined to overestimate the Eastern contribution to our civilization at the expense of the classical and appears to take a slightly too optimistic view of the Arab Middle Ages.

102. *Al-Islām wa'l-ḥaḍāra al-ʿarabiyya*, I, pp. 327–38.

103. *Ibid.*, I, p. 329.

104. *Ibid.*, I, p. 331.

105. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 337–38.

106. *Ibid.*, I, p. 338.

107. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 351–63.

108. *Ibid.*, I, pp. 360–61.

109. *Ibid.*, I, p. 362.

110. *Ibid.*, I, p. 363.

111. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 1–93.

112. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 94–330.

113. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 331–537.

114. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 1–18.

115. *Ibid.*, II, p. 16.

116. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 538–40.

117. *Ibid.*, II, p. 540.

118. *Mustaqbal ath-thaqāfa fī Miṣr* (Cairo, 1938), pp. 2–70.

119. *Ibid.*, chap. I, pp. 2–5.

120. *Ibid.*, chap. II, pp. 6–11.

121. Founder of the first Muslim dynasty of independent governors and rulers of Egypt.

122. *Ibid.*, chap. III, pp. 12–18.

123. *Ibid.*, chap. IV, pp. 19–20.

124. At this point as elsewhere the ambiguity of Taha Ḥusain's terms would seem to affect his argumentation adversely, seeing that he had been at pains to point out that the Near East was Mediterranean rather than Eastern; but obviously his main contention, as deriving from intuition and an act of will, remains untouched

by success or failure of individual pieces of evidence; to this writer Ṭaha Ḥusain's statement appears to gain in significance the closer we move toward the Hellenistic period and past it into modern times.

125. H. Pirenne, *Mahomet et Charlemagne* (Paris, 1937); English edition under the title *Mohammed and Charlemagne* (New York, 1939).

126. Ṭaha Ḥusain, *op. cit.*, chap. V, pp. 21–26.

127. *Ibid.*, chap. VI, pp. 27–29.

128. Ottoman sultan, 1876–1909.

129. The foremost Muslim divinity school founded soon after 972 when the mosque of al-Azhar was built. The school has lately been reorganizing in the direction of a university in the Western sense of the word. Instruction offered begins at the elementary level.

130. Ṭaha Ḥusain himself studied at al-Azhar. He describes this period of his life and his eventual break with al-Azhar in his charming and somewhat novelistic autobiography, *al-Ayyām;* English translation: Part One: *An Egyptian Childhood*, trans. E. H. Paxton (London, 1932); Part Two: *The Stream of Days. A Student at the Azhar*, trans. H. Wayment (Cairo, 1943). For the reform movement in al-Azhar, cf. A. Sékaly, *Revue des Études Islamiques*, I (1927), 95–118, 465–529; II (1928), 46–165, 225–337, 401–72; the new statute as promulgated by Royal Rescript of March 26, 1936, is translated in *Revue des Études Islamiques*, X (1936), 1–43.

131. Ṭaha Ḥusain, *Mustaqbal . . .* , chap. VII, pp. 30–39.

132. *Ibid.*, chap. VIII, pp. 40–44.

133. *Ibid.*, chap. IX, pp. 45–51.

134. This discussion clearly does not do justice to the function of religion in Western civilization nor does it take into account the differences within the West due to different religious affiliation. It is significant, however, as indicating the type of objections and fears the Muslim Westernizer has to combat.

135. *Ibid.*, chap. X, pp. 52–61.

136. Here Ṭaha Ḥusain's argument reflects an idea often voiced by modern Egyptian writers; cf. H. Pérès's highly instructive collection of Préfaces d'auteurs arabes à leurs romans ou à leurs recueils de contes et nouvelles," in *Faculté des lettres de l'Université d'Alger, Annales de l'Institut d'Études Orientales*, 1939–41, V, pp. 137–94.

137. Ṭaha Ḥusain, *Mustaqbal . . .* , chap. XI, pp. 62–64.

138. Unfortunately for the Arab world, Ṭaha Ḥusain's appeal to abandon the comfortable antithesis of the spiritual East and the materialistic West has not met with the response it deserves. In self-justification and in polemics, a fictitious or, at best, a superficially interpreted West continues to be the target. A. H. Hourani, in a striking paragraph of his remarkable study *Syria and Lebanon: A Political Essay* (London, 1946, p. 78), has underlined the necessity for the Arabs to reach a more profound understanding of the West, as a prerequisite for the reconstruction of Islamic thought. He concludes his argument with the observation that " . . . many and perhaps most Arab Moslem thinkers of today largely fail to understand the spirit of the West. Western civilization, they say, is wholly materialist; it has no spiritual life to compare with that of Asia. Sooner or later, this mythical antithesis between the materialist West and the spiritual East will have to be exploded: and they will be forced to realize that the spiritual life of Europe even today is as intense, profound, and creative as anything which Asia has to offer."

139. It should be noted that Ṭaha Ḥusain has lately retreated somewhat from the concept of Egypt as essentially of the West, in favor of viewing her rather as a link between East and West; cf. D. S. Goitein, *Commentary*, VII, 2 (February, 1949), 159.

140. Qaṣṭmī, *Hādt hiya 'l-aghlāl* ("These Are the Chains") (Cairo, 1946).

141. The name and the dedication to King Ibn Su'ûd suggest that Qaṣîmî is a Najdi. I have, however, not been able to obtain any data on him.

142. Qaṣîmî, *op. cit.*, pp. 5–11.

143. *Ibid.*, pp. 12–24.

144. As demanded, e.g., by the Muslim Brotherhood, *al-Iḫwân al-Muslimûn.*

145. Cf. *ibid.*, chap. I, pp. 25–70, with its characteristic title: "They have disbelieved in man—belief in him comes first."

146. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

147. Koran, 47:8; the translation here and further on is that of R. Bell, *The Qur'ân* (Edinburgh, 1937–39).

148. The koranic passages which Qaṣîmî interprets rather freely are, in order of quotation: 2:28–33; 95:4; 63:4 combined with 95:5–6; 51:20–21; 55:1–3.

149. The kindred view of Alfred Weber will be remembered; cf. his *Fundamentals of Culture Sociology: Social Process, Civilizational Process and Culture Movement* (New York: Works Projects Administration, in connection with the Department of Social Studies of Columbia University, 1939), pp. 19–22.

150. Qaṣîmî, *op. cit.*, pp. 287–314.

151. *aṭwâran*, from the root *ṭwr* from which also *taṭawwur*, development. Qaṣîmî here alludes to Koran 71:13.

152. It should perhaps be noted that the *ijmâ'* is traditionally represented as unerring.

153. Qaṣîmî, *op. cit.*, pp. 308–9.

154. *Ibid.*, p. 309.

155. *Ibid.*, p. 312.

156. *Ibid.*, pp. 315–29.

157. *Iḥyâ'* (Bûlâq, 1289/1872), II, p. 157.

158. Edward Atiyah, *An Arab Tells His Story. A Study in Loyalties* (London, 1946), p. 10; cf. also the first chapter of the book, pp. 1–4.

159. For this statement, cf. J. Lecerf, "Šibli Šumayyil metaphysicien et moraliste contemporain," *Institut Français de Damas, Bulletin d'Etudes Orientales*, I (1931), 153–86, 164.

160. To use the terminology of A. O. Lovejoy and G. Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (Baltimore, 1935); cf. esp. pp. 2–3.

161. Cf. *Ḥayât Muḥammad*, pp. 526–27, on the gradual decline of the moral order instituted by Muḥammad.

162. Pp. 2 ff. of the *al-Hilâl* editorial.

163. Koran, 42:36 (Rodwell's translation).

164. Koran, 3:153.

165. Koran, 49:13 (Rodwell's translation slightly changed).

166. *Al-Hilâl* (December, 1941), pp. 16 ff.

167. Cf. Lecerf, *Mélanges*, I (1929), 32–33.

168. See above, note 4; an Arabic edition of the book appeared in Cairo in 1925.

169. Cf. also Lecerf, *Mélanges*, p. 44.

170. Cf. H. H. Schaeder, *Die Antike*, IV (1928), 233, and H. A. R. Gibb, *BSOS*, V (1928–30), 455–56, on the failure of Islam to accept the essentials of the Greek spirit.

171. G. L. Della Vida, *The Crozier Quarterly*, XXI (1944), 212–13.

172. Cf. also Lecerf, *Bulletin*, I, p. 184.

173. For these dilemmas, see Lecerf's remarks, *Mélanges*, I, p. 49.

174. Weber, *op. cit.*, *passim*, but esp. pp. 25–26.

175. A. Bonné, *State and Economics in the Middle East* (London, 1948), pp. 382–85.

176. *Ibid.*, pp. 384–85.

WESTERNIZATION IN ISLAM AND THE THEORY OF CULTURAL BORROWING

To AN OUTSIDE OBSERVER, it would seem that over the last thirty or forty years the political advancement of the Muslim countries has outrun the cultural. From the point of view of the conservative or merely the tradition-conscious Muslim, a statement of this kind would signify that the present generation of his coreligionists as well as its immediate predecessors have been more successful in strengthening or recreating Islamic states than in reviving Islam. The modernist, on the other hand, would take it as an appraisal of the incomplete and uneven adjustment made to the revitalizing influences of the West.

The Muslim conservative will envisage progress as the rejuvenation of the heritage, as a return to the spirit and, with some qualifications, to the essential institutions of the Prophet's times. The basic truths and ordinances that were laid down by revelation and embodied, as it were, in the Prophet's life and in the organization of the early believers need only to be cleansed of the rust of historical accretions to become effectively usable in our own day. The content of revelation is inexhaustible; what is defective is man's understanding of it. But the very needs of the present will open the believers' eyes to the correct solution, as prescribed clearly, yet unrecognized in the text of the Koran or in the example of the Prophet.

The secularized citizen of a Muslim country will be skeptical as to the possibility and even the desirability of a return to the past, however glorious, but his culture consciousness (even though rarely articulated in arguable terms) will generally incline him toward retaining as much of his tradition as is compatible with that civic upsurge which is his principal concern.

However much their attitudes toward their heritage of the conservative and the secularized may differ, the outlook of both wings of Muslim opinion is conditioned by fact and threat of Westernization. The modernist will not quarrel with this diagnosis; the con-

servative may admit its truth when he is reminded that some eight centuries ago Muslim orthodoxy revived and became consolidated when the Bâṭiniyya compelled the re-examination and redefinition of the fundamentals of the faith.

The political and the cultural realities of the last one hundred and fifty years have made it inevitable that the presence of the West and its civilizational concepts should be reflected in any attempt to re-think Islam, regardless of how private and isolationist such an attempt may appear to those who undertake it. The questions asked and the values implied in reconsideration almost always reflect their origin in Western criticism, actual or presumed.

It may be doubted that cultural revival and cultural transfer can be analyzed into as conscious and voluntary a sequence of actions as the individuals and groups confronted with the varied offerings of an alien civilization may wish to believe. Yet it remains true that in so far as collective decisions can be made by the Muslim peoples —and this is possible primarily through the creation of a climate of opinion favorable or unfavorable to receptiveness—any such decisions will be two-faced, involving a simultaneous and correlated response to the West (as they choose to visualize its culture) and their own inherited norms and ways (which of course differ widely in different countries, but are experienced as the outgrowth of a common spirit). So the Muslim is compelled to exercise an option, however inarticulate, as to the desirability of Westernization and again as to the limits to which it should be carried. The foreign gift has to be tested for its compatibility with tradition—and tradition may have to be reinterpreted to render possible the test. Some elements will seem more dispensable than others; romantic attachment may suggest preservation of concepts and forms of life that history has actually stripped of their motivating forces. On the other hand, political expediency and intellectual fashion may recommend the adoption of the irrelevant or the destructive, not to speak of the danger of the psychological situation's blocking altogether an understanding of the structure of the Western world.

The analyst on the outside and the would-be prognosticator on the inside must needs be groping for generalizations about acculturation and cultural transfer to impart meaning to their observations as well as to guide their expectations—perhaps even to rationalize what possibilities for influencing the process there may exist.

Arnold J. Toynbee has attempted to interpret the phenomenon of cultural borrowing in terms of four theses: (*a*) individual traits of

an alien culture will be more readily admitted than that culture as a whole; (b) "the penetrative power of a strand of cultural radiation is usually in inverse ratio to this strand's cultural value"; (c) "one element of an alien civilization if admitted will draw after it the rest"; (d) "the lone element may be more disturbing to the receiving civilization than the whole would have been."[1]

These theses were deduced from an analysis of the reaction of the peoples of Russia, Turkey, India, and the Far East to the impact of occidental civilization from the sixteenth century onward. Consequently they contain a great deal of truth with respect to the phenomena whose structure they are meant to describe, but they will need to be tested against incidents of culture transfer that were not considered in their formulation. Besides, one may wonder if Toynbee's theses actually are as inclusive as their author seems to feel.

Toynbee appears to imply that initial borrowing of an essential element of an alien civilization necessarily entails in due time the almost complete taking over of all its essential elements—a technological borrowing is bound to bring about changes in attitudes, social as well as intellectual, and those changes in turn will compel further loans on the scientific and philosophical, and ultimately even on the religious, levels. It need barely be stressed that with this assumption Toynbee forsakes the role of the historian for that of the prophet; for up to the present almost nowhere has Western civilization been carried through to the limits envisaged by Toynbee as ineluctable consequences of the first borrowing. On the other hand, the history of Islamic civilization provides more than one example where borrowing has not followed the sequence postulated by Toynbee.

Thus we know that in the early Abbasid period Indian medicine and mathematics (including astronomy) were eagerly studied and emulated by Muslim scholars; we also know that Greek logic and philosophy were welcomed into Muslim civilization at about the same time; and again it happened under the early Abbasids that Iranian administrative techniques and even important elements of Iranian political thinking were adopted and acted upon by the leading strata of the Islamic world.

It is true that integration of these and similar Iranian elements incisively changed the civilization of Islam. One would even be justified in claiming that this civilization, as it has ever since appeared to contemporary and historian alike, can in large measure

be analyzed to be the result of the very integration of those borrowings in the earlier and predominating Arabic culture of the Muslim conquerors. But this observation will not conceal the further facts that those borrowings (a) did not begin on what to Toynbee is the most "trifling" level, viz., in technology; that they (b) did not compel ever renewed additional borrowings; and finally, that they (c) did not prove disruptive in the same sense in which Toynbee has noted the destructive effect of arbitrarily selected Western traits on the Eastern cultural milieu.

A number of reasons may be suggested to account for the "deviant" behavior of Abbasid civilization. For one thing, Toynbee's concept of the triviality of technology as a borrowed cultural element requires modification, in that a distinction needs to be introduced between such impinging technologies as operate with the same basic means and such as are predicated on the harnessing of totally different natural forces. Even had there been an enrichment of early Abbasid techniques by the inclusion of some Indian devices, due to the fundamental oneness of those technologies, relying as both were on human and animal labor and on water works, the impact of the borrowing would indeed have been trivial; that is to say, it would not have upset the traditional ways of doing things to an extent requiring major intellectual or affective adjustments. But the breaking into the traditional range of techniques of a technology operating with the aid of electrical or atomic power is an event not only of a different magnitude but of a different order altogether.

More important, however, is another consideration. Normally a civilization will borrow where it feels incapable of meeting a problem from its own resources. A system of logical thought was needed on account of the contact of an as yet somewhat naïve Islamic theology with the sophisticated theological systems of neighbors and conquered. Persian administrative procedure was expected to remove governmental difficulties that had not yielded to traditional administrative procedures. Improved mathematical and medical insight was welcome for obvious reasons, but was not readily attainable from the indigenous heritage. But no need was felt for Indian or Byzantine technology, and neither was there any desire to substitute, say, Hinduism or Christianity for Islam—the whims of individuals to the contrary notwithstanding. So scientific and philosophical material was sought—methods as well as factual information—but little else was taken in by the early Ab-

basid age, and what it did adopt certainly did not follow the normative sequence of value levels posited by Toynbee.

The factor which most sharply distinguishes the cultural transfers effected by the Muslims in the eighth and ninth centuries from those effected by the Muslim world of today has been completely neglected in Toynbee's analysis. It is the reversed political situation. The early Abbasid age did not borrow, say, Indian astronomy or even Persian administration, because they viewed those foreign achievements as the only means to stave off political or economic infiltration and domination. Islam then was not on the defensive. It adopted alien possibilities for its own ends, and it did so unhurriedly; the pressures to which it yielded were germane to its developmental phase, not imposed from outside. In short, it is the political involvement that directs the culture transfer in our time which makes it psychologically and socially so difficult and so disruptive for the receiving groups. Selection and timing, constructive response and hostile reaction, are no longer conditioned by the state of growth and the actual intellectual and emotional needs of the borrowing, but by extracultural aspirations—one could almost say, by a series of emergency situations over which the would-be borrower has but limited control. Hence it is the totally different complexion of their political position which enabled the early Abbasids to proceed in a manner no longer open to their distant successors and which, conversely, protected their age from the danger incident to cultural borrowing in our Western-dominated period.

Measured against today's Westernization and specifically against today's political conditions that provide its setting, Hellenism, the only comparable wave of Westernization that engulfed what is now the heartlands of Islam, had placed the Near Easterner in a psychologically more satisfactory position. Outside of Iran proper, Alexander the Great did not have to contend with Oriental nationalism; the independence of the local ethnic groups had been curtailed or abolished by the Persians; the Macedonians may not have been liberators, but they were not oppressors. The national *Eigenleben* of the Asiatic peoples was not at stake in the fight to overthrow the Achaemenid empire and replace it by what has come to be known as a Hellenistic state. So Greek civilization could be judged and appropriated on its intrinsic merits. The prestige of the rulers and their political interest doubtless promoted its spread. Hellenism came to be appreciated as the initiation into a higher type of life,

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but it was for the Near Easterner by and large a personal decision whether or not, or to what extent, to identify himself with the Western patterns of thought and behavior, that through their very diffusion and through the intense participation of Orientals in their development would become less and less of a foreign and intruding force. The culture-Greek of the period, who adopted a Greek name along with, or in lieu of, his native name, who if he remained bilingual at all would use Greek for his public utterances, who, in short, tended rather painlessly to become a member in good standing of the supreme civilization of his day—this culture-Greek did not have any conflict of loyalties to resolve; he did not have to play to two antagonistic galleries at the same time and to apologize to himself and to his environment for allowing himself to be captivated by the best his period had to offer. Only gradually and, what is more important, only in certain regions did a self-conscious national feeling rise to animate the native population. And in the (now Arabic) key lands of the Near East this feeling expressed itself in Greek, and, characteristically, almost exclusively on the cultural level, while the local political life remained for centuries submerged in the universalism of the Roman Empire. The one people among whom the conflict between the Hellenizers and the nationalists took a form comparable to the conflict besetting the modern Muslim world were the Jews; and it was precisely the "modern" mixture of political and cultural self-consciousness, the conviction that cultural identity requires political safeguards, which precipitated the domestic struggles against the Westernizing upper strata and, ultimately, a series of desperate wars against the political representatives of Western civilization.[2]

Abandonment of Islam, not in the form of a more or less complete secularization of Muslim life, but rather in that of its merging into a universal religious movement, appears to be the unspoken hope or expectation which Toynbee nourishes, on the basis of his analysis of cultural borrowing and its consequences for the borrower. There is little in what a detached observer of Islam can perceive today that would bear out Toynbee's view of de-Islamization as the ultimate solution of the acculturation problems of the Muslim world. Quite apart from the fact that the notion of a complete and one-sided acculturation to the West of the Islamic cultural area could not in any case be reasonably entertained, it would seem that the problem of such acculturation needs to be approached from

a point of departure that is very different from that chosen by Toynbee.

For the purpose of this investigation, culture may be described as a "closed" system of questions and answers concerning the universe and man's behavior in it which has been accepted as authoritative by a human society. A scale of values decides the relative position and importance of the individual "questions and answers." In other words, it is a value judgment that will convey coherence to, and regulate interaction of, the various "answers" which are accepted by the particular culture and by which the lives of individual and group are lived. To describe culture as a "closed" system does not, of course, imply limitation in number of admissible questions; the term merely suggests that these questions reach out into every section of the universe which, at any given moment, is relevant to the experience of the community. By the same token, the answers, especially those that appear as rules of conduct, will have to cover virtually every contingency arising in the life of the community.

As the experience of the community changes, the power to formulate and answer new questions in terms of the traditional values and the decisions previously arrived at will indicate a culture's ability to continue. Once internal or external experience creates intellectual, emotional, or organizational needs that cannot be met by the insights or hypotheses evolved within the particular closed system, this system, its basic values as well as its doctrinal and ethical solutions, will command less and less unquestioning adherence. The door will be opened for its transformation, or even displacement.

On the one hand religion, or more exactly a new or radically reformed religion, and on the other the forceful encounter with an alien civilization that is, however reluctantly, recognized as superior in certain essential respects are likely to prove the most potent motive forces in the transformation of culture, as they are apt to revise and even to replace the basic value judgments, the *Ordnungsprinzip* of the cultural system, more thoroughly than any other set of newly introduced ideas whose scope will be *ex professo* limited to restricted fields such as economics or the art of politics. In addition to changing the basic values of the cultural system the new religion will (*a*) introduce, or admit as legitimate, new questions, for which appropriate answers will be offered; and (*b*) suggest new answers to old questions, or legitimize answers that seemed dis-

rupting or otherwise inacceptable within the superseded system. Viewed in this manner, "transformation of culture" is but a special case of the phenomenon of "influence." For influence is noted when (*a*) a solution to a (cultural) problem, (*b*) a problem, or (*c*) both, are introduced from outside into a system to which problem and/or solution are not germane. Foreign influence does not, of course, necessarily include, but is apt to provoke or speed, that change in basic values which is transformation.[3]

So it would seem that an internal movement such as the (re)birth of a religion in the culture area is an even more potent stimulus to reorganization of the total life-pattern of this community than the encounter of civilizations can be, no matter how overwhelming the superiority, imagined or real, of the impinging culture and no matter how anxious the partner to adjust in every possible regard. As Islam is in no danger of becoming physically extinct owing to the impact of the West, it would seem that its assimilation of Western elements will remain confined to such as may migrate "from people to people, thanks to the use of technological, practical and applied arts and methods." The Westernization potential of the Muslim world clearly includes "a higher rationalization of thought and the co-ordination of economy, technique, and the State," but it is not likely to include "the underlying principles as embodied in religion, philosophy, art or rational scientific theory."[4] In brief, Islam is not likely to lose itself in Western civilization to the extinction of its own "personality," even though it may use the foreign stimulus as a lever for its own revitalization.

The assimilation into Islam of European nationalism and the almost exclusive preoccupation with making the most effective political use of this new force will, one is almost moved to say unfortunately, contribute to maintaining rather than transcending the anticipated limitations of acculturation. Is it not sadly significant in this context that Muslim cultural self-consciousness has as yet in no way caught up with Muslim political emancipation? that the modern Muslim contribution to humane scholarship has not been on the highest level of relevance? that the important studies on the great Muslim thinkers, on the great collective achievements of Islam such as theology or literature, are almost without exception owed to Western scholars? Historical research along Western methods has been accepted in theory; actually, the gap between the adoption of a program and the appropriate adjustment of traditional values and techniques and the implementation of the

labor called for by the new values is very considerable, and one would go amiss were one to expect any sudden changes.

It may well be true that what Islam needs at the moment is not a historiography devoted to tracing the interplay of causes and effects but rather a metaphysics to justify its existence and to encourage its progress in a Westernized world.[5] But as the Muslim world becomes more assured of its revived strength and more certain of its position in the comity of nations, a less directly purposeful mode of introspection will have to be developed if its results are to be meaningful beyond the place and time to which they owe their origin. If we leave aside the peculiar requirements of historical science which make it especially vulnerable to the lag in attitudinal adjustment, it must be conceded in general that from the point of view of the conservative Muslim this very slowness of attitudinal transformation provides a definite safeguard against a precipitate abandonment of such essential traits of his civilization which need not or should not be given up lightly. In other words, the attitudinal lag—although it will on occasion vitiate the successful application of a highly desirable borrowing—constitutes a powerful and valuable inner defense, a breakwater as it were to diminish the impact on society of alien contributions that have already been admitted on the ideological and institutional levels.

Hesitation and even deliberate backwardness must be appreciated as subconscious devices for self-preservation, which should not be completely discarded before the new values and the old aspirations have been more convincingly attuned to each other. But this relating of the new values to the central experience and therewith to the central aspiration of the traditional culture is bound to be slow, and it is bound to be carried out hesitatingly and, in the beginning at least, to be done inconsistently and perhaps superficially. That a Westernized state structure calls for a Westernized historiography—an insight of this order is more readily accepted than implemented. For the attitudes that govern our behavior are less easily revised than are the institutions which do so outwardly and the ideas which we would believe ourselves to be governed by.

NOTES

1. *The World and the West* (New York and London, 1953), esp. pp. 67–71.

2. G. E. von Grunebaum, in *Perspectives on a Troubled Decade, Proceedings of the Tenth Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, 1939–1949*, ed. Lyman Bryson, Louis Finkelstein, and R. M. MacIver (New York, 1950), pp. 179–80.

3. G. E. von Grunebaum, in *Conflicts of Power in Modern Culture, Proceedings of*

the Seventh Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, ed. Lyman Bryson, Louis Finkelstein, and R. M. MacIver (New York, 1948), pp. 218–19.

4. A. Bonné, *State and Economics in the Middle East* (London, 1948), pp. 84–85.

5. Cf. W. Thomson, in *Approaches to Group Understanding, Proceedings of the Sixth Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion*, ed. Lyman Bryson, Louis Finkelstein, and R. M. MacIver (New York, 1947), p. 786, n. *a*.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

(i) Manichaeanism and Islam exhibit significant similarities in their ideas of the nature of a prophet and of a sacred book; they further share a peculiar feeling for the superiority over preceding and comparable faiths of their predication as well as a strong concern with the possibility of alteration, on the part of disciples, of the original message. Character and extent of these similarities warrant a special investigation. The following references are to serve merely as possible points of departure for closer study: R. Blachère, *Le Problème de Mahomet* (Paris, 1952), pp. 62–63 and 80; H.-C. Puech, *Le Manichéisme* (Paris, 1949), esp. pp. 43, 58, 61–63 and 241; A. Jeffery, *The Qur'ān as Scripture* (New York, 1952), pp. 83–84; and the article by I. Goldziher, *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, XXXII (1878), 341 ff. H. S. Nyberg, Forschungen über den Manichäismus, *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, XXXIV (1935), 70–91, has discussed the existence of Manichaean communities among Arab groups both before and after Islam (at pp. 89 and 74 respectively; for the Manichaeans of Arabic-Islamic background cf. also Nyberg's study, *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*, 1929, 425–441). [See p. 2].

(ii) Cf. also the problems discussed in Tauḥīdī's *Muqābasāt*, ed. H. as-Sandūbī (Cairo, 1347/1929); the topics of the speeches in the Buzurjmihr episode of the *Shāh-Nāma*, trans. A. G. and E. W. Warner (London, 1905-25), VII, 287 ff.; the list of the principal questions solved by it which the so-called *Theology of Aristotle* contains (ed. F. Dieterici, Leipzig, 1882, pp. 171–80) may also be considered when the shifting interests of intellectual circles are examined. The opinions of the inhabitants of Fārābī's (d. 950) virtuous city, i.e. the range of interests expected of them, also bears on this subject; cf. *Kitāb ārā' ahl al-madīna 'l-fāḍila* (Cairo, 1368/1948), pp. 102–103, and *Kitāb as-siyāsa 'l-madaniyya* (Hyderabad, 1346), p. 55. Revealing is also the list of controversial literary topics in Jāḥiẓ, *Kitāb al-ḥayawān* (Cairo, 1325/1907), VII, 5–20. [See p. 30.]

(iii) ʿAbdarraḥmān Badawī, *Fontes graecae doctrinarum politicarum islamicarum* (Cairo, 1954), Introduction, pp. 5–7, discusses the conflict within the *shuʿūbiyya* of the Iranian and the Hellenizing wings; Persian thought predominates in political theory of the eighth and ninth centuries; ca. 900 an attempt begins to counteract this influence by the publication of writings such as Badawī's volume presents; for this cf. also the passage in the text part of the book, pp. 3–4. [See p. 49.]

(iv) Similar laudations have been bestowed on Christian princes as well. In a sermon, Father Serrault compared Louis XIV to God and the Dauphin to Jesus-Christ; cf. D. Ogg, *Europe in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1948), pp. 316–17. [See p. 51.]

(v) The grammarian al-Māzinī (d. probably ca. 863) rejected an offer of a hundred *dīnār* made him by a Jew for teaching him the *Kitāb* of Sībawaih because of religious scruples; cf. Yāqūt, *Irshād al-arīb*, ed. D. S. Margoliouth (London, 1923-31), II, 382, as quoted by R. Sellheim, *Die Gelehrtenbiographien des Abū ʿUbaidallāh al-Marzubānī* (Bonn a/Rh., 1957; typescript), p. 28. Correspondingly, there exists the obligation for every Muslim to know Arabic; cf., e.g., Muḥammad Rashīd Riḍā *Tafsīr Manār* (Cairo, 1346-54), V, 114–15, and J. Jomier, *Le Commentaire coranique du Manār* (Paris, 1954), p. 209, n. 2. For the philosopher al-Kindī (d. 873), on the other hand, the cultural community coincides with the community of language; he professes to labor for the *ahl lisāni-nā*, the people of our tongue, regardless of denominational differences; cf. F. Rosenthal, al-Kindī and Ptolemy, *Studi orientalistici in onore di Giorgio Levi Della Vida* (Rome, 1956), II, 436–456, at p. 445. [See p. 53.]

(vi) The eighth-century poet, Abū 'l-Hindī Ghālib b. ʿAbdalquddūs, a *muḥaḍram ad-daulatain*, fails to attain the fame his gifts would deserve because of his remoteness from the *bilād al-ʿArab*—he lived in Sijistān and Ḥurāsān—, his addiction to wine and women, and his lack of religion; al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-aghānī*, XXI, ed. R. Brünnow (Leiden, 1888), p. 277[2-6]. [See p. 54.]

(vii) At the reception of the envoys of the caliph al-Qā'im (A.D. 1031–2), the Ḥuǎja-yi *Buzurg* of Sulṭān Masʿūd, Maḥmūd's successor, gives a speech in Persian, *ba-tāzī*; when the documents sent by the caliph had been read before the Sultan he commands: "Read a translation, so they will be clearly understood by all." Thereupon a version *ba-pārsī* is read out. Cf. Baihaqī (d. 1077), *Ta'rīḫ*, ed. S. Nafīsī (Teheran, 1940 ff.), I, 348[7, 11–12]. [See p. 54.]

(viii) For the decline of the knowledge of Arabic in Iran (and especially its Eastern parts) cf. B. Spuler, *Saeculum*, VIII (1957), 274. [See p. 54.]

(ix) Under Aybak (1250–57) another non-Turk, al-Asʿad Sharaf ad-Dīn b. Wahīb Allāh al-Fā'izī, a native of Asyūt, became both a general and a vizier; cf. Ṣ. Waḥīda, *Fī uṣūl al-masʾala 'l-miṣriyya* (Cairo, 1950), p. 100. [See p. 54.]

(x) The *aulād shaiḫ ash-shuyūḫ* represent an interesting example of participation under the Ayyūbids of a non-Turkish family in government, even the conduct of war, and of the interlocking of religious scholarship, Ṣūfic activities and political involvement; cf. H. L. Gottschalk, Die Aulād Šaiḫ aš-šuyūḫ (Banū Ḥamawiya), *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, LIII/1–2 (1956), 57–87. [See p. 54.]

(xi) The directions on how to become a poet which Kaikā'ūs b. Iskandar, in 1082, incorporated in his *Qābūs Nāma*, ed. R. Levy (London, 1951), pp. 109–110; translated by the same under the title *A Mirror for Princes* (London, 1951), pp. 182–85, are inspired by the same outlook on literature. (See p. 56.]

(xii) The sense that (Southern) India constitutes a different culture area is clearly noticeable in ʿAbdarrazzāq as-Samarqandī's report on his mission there (1441–44) which forms part of his *Maṭlaʿ as-saʿdain;* a partial translation of the passage is included in A. J. Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature* (London, 1958). pp. 382–84. [See p. 56.]

(xiii) The fact that cultural identification depends, to a certain extent, on the personal decision of the subject has also been realised by H. Marrou, *De la connaissance historique* (Paris, 1955), p. 212. (Cf. *ibid.*, p. 213, the discussion of the possibility of making Chinese or Arab history meaningful to the Occidental.) [See p. 78.]

(xiv) The same combination of a belief in the progress of scientific knowledge and the ethical value of the pursuit of this knowledge animates a passage in Plutarch's *Quaestiones conviviales*, which is quoted by F. J. Dölger, *Die Sonne der Gerechtigkeit und der Schwarze* (Münster i.W., 1918), pp. viii–ix. [See p. 79.]

(xv) As a sample of other classifications of the contents of the Book the view of Abū ʿUbaid (d. 838) may be mentioned according to which the Koran offers ten types of material, *ʿashara aḥruf;* cf. Tauḥīdī, *al-Baṣā'ir wa'd-ḏaḫā'ir* (Cairo, 1373–1953), pp. 130–31. [See p. 92.]

(xvi) The idea of "confusion" is inherent in the order of the adversary. Cf., e.g., St. Augustine, Sermones ad plebem: Enarratio in Ps. LXI, *Patrologia Latina*, XXXVI, 733, the confrontation of Babylon and Jerusalem where Babylon is explained as signifying "confusion" and Jerusalem, the city of peace. The passage is discussed by F. Tournier, Les "deux cités" dans la littérature chrétienne, *Études*, CXXIII (1910), 646. [See p. 109.]

(xvii) On the concept of the science of *taṣawwuf* and the criticism directed against it cf. M. Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldūns' Philosophy of History* (London, 1957), pp. 99 and 106–107. [See p. 123.]

(xviii) Evidence on the position of logic in the Muslim system of sciences has been collected by A. S. Tritton, *Materials on Muslim Education in the Middle Ages* (London, 1957), pp. 170–72. [See p. 124.]

(xix) Similar is the story told by Tanūḫī (d. 994), *Nishwār al-muḥāḍara*, II, trans. D. S. Margoliouth, *Islamic Culture*, V (1931), 171 (no. 2), in which, under the impact of a dream, a man tears up Galen's *Anatomy* as an irreligious book. For the concept of the "useful" sciences, the attitude of the mystics to rational versus intuitive knowledge, and the consequences of these ideas in terms of the retrenchment of the cultural

horizon, cf. the chapters of H. Ritter and F. Meier in R. Brunschvig and G. E. von Grunebaum (eds.), *Classicisme et déclin culturel dans l'histoire de l'Islam* (Paris, 1957), pp. 167–83 and 217–45. [See p. 125.]

(xx) For the structure of the Islamic town in the West cf. E. Lévi-Provençal, *Conférences sur l'Espagne musulmane* (Cairo, 1951), esp. chs. 5 and 6 ; L. Torres Balbás *et al.*, *Resumén historico del urbanismo en Espana* (Madrid, 1954), esp. ch. 1 ; the numerous contributions of Torres Balbás in *al-Andalus;* and R. Le Tourneau, *Fès avant le Protectorat* (Casablanca, 1949). [See p. 157].

(xxi) For the survival of guild life in contemporary Tetuán cf. W. Hoenerbach, Das Zunft- und Marktwesen und seine Verwaltung im heutigen Tetuan, *Die Welt des Islams*, n.s., IV (1955), 79–123. [See p. 157.]

(xxii) The atmosphere in the traditional milieux of the lower bourgeosie of a Muslim town has been well described by Ahmed Sefrioui (born *ca.* 1915), *La boîte à merveilles* (Paris, 1954 ; written in 1952), which reflects the author's childhood in his native city of Fez. [See p. 158.]

(xxiii) Tauḥīdī, *Baṣā'ir*, p. 128[12-13], quotes the praise bestowed by an unnamed Bedouin on the *Mirbad*, the main plaza of Baṣra as a center of news and the place of encounter of Arabs of all backgrounds. [See p. 158.]

(xxiv) The motif of the soul's nostalgia while it is confined to the body is ever and again taken up by poetry ; a less-known example from the work of Sulṭān Uwais (d. 1376) is translated in Arberry, *Classical Persian Literature*, p. 321. [See p. 165.]

(xxv) Farīd ad-Dīn 'Aṭṭār (d. 1230), *Ilāhī-Nāma*, ed. H. Ritter (Leipzig, 1940) p. 94[9ff]. uses elements of the Iranian *Heldensage* for the illustration of Ṣūfic ideas; cf. F. Meier, *Eranos-Jahrbuch*, XXIII (1955), 135. [See p. 181.]

(xxvi) On the other hand, the sensitivity was great for the moral danger which the historian incurred by endorsing reports and pronouncing judgments which might be false ; Tritton, *op. cit.*, p. 76, summarises conveniently the opinion on this topic of Tāj ad-Dīn as-Subkī (d. 1370), whose view can be taken as typical. [See p. 183.]

(xxvii) On the problem of the development of Persian meters cf. further A. Christensen, *Les Gestes des rois dans les traditions de l'Iran antique* (Paris, 1936), pp. 46–56. [See p. 184.]

INDEX
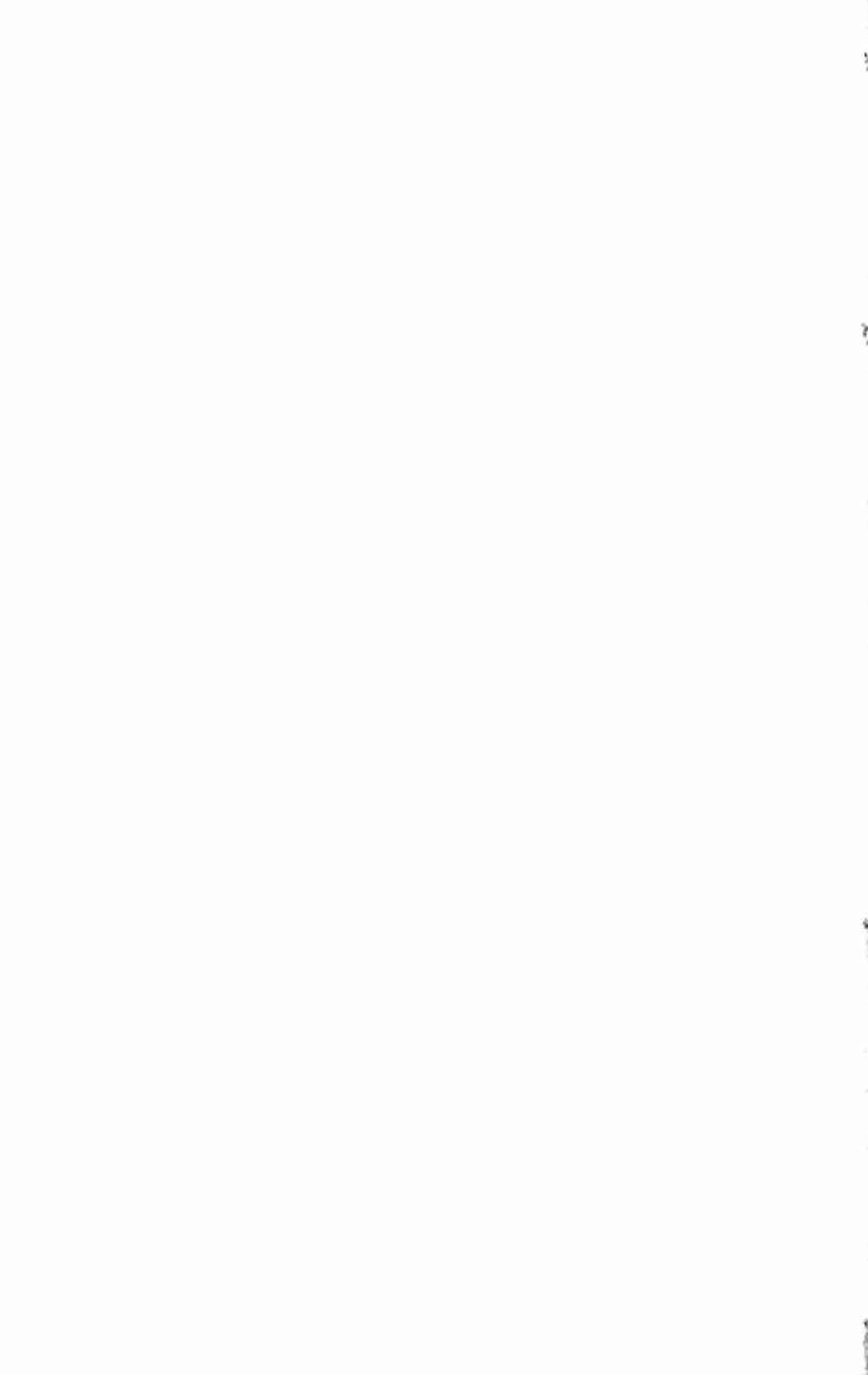
INDEX

Words which with their synonyms appear too frequently are omitted from this index, such as *God, Koran, Muḥammad, Arab* or *Arabic, Persian* or *Iranian, Muslim, Western, Hellenistic* or *Greek, Christian.*

255